ANTIOCH the REVIEW

FALL 59

James Harrington and T. V. Smith: A Study in the Politics of Privacy

RALPH L. RETCHAM

The Passing of Bughouse Square

WILLIAM G. CARLETON

What Good Is Literary Criticism?

NORMAN FRIEDMAN

In Defense of Philosophical History

FRANK E. MANUEL

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FALL '60 VOLUME XX NO. 3

James Madison and T. V. Smith: A Study in the Politics of Privacy 261
article by RALPH L. KETCHAM

The Passing of Bughouse Square 282
essay by WILLIAM G. CARLETON

An Open Letter to W. B. Yeats 293
poem by S. J. SACKETT

Momma On Mt. X
Song 294
poems by ROBERT SWARD

Sino-Indian Relations 296
article by S. CHANDRASEKHAR

No Wind 307
poem by CHARLES FARBER

The One Excuse 308
poem by ALBERTA T. TURNER

The Anatomy of Miss Byrd 309
story by PETER SHRUBB

What Good Is Literary Criticism? 315
article by NORMAN FRIEDMAN

In Defense of Philosophical History 331
article by FRANK E. MANUEL

Toad
West of Eden 344
poems by PAUL KENDALL

The Screen 347
story by ZOFIA ROMANOWICZ

A New Liberalism to Pay Old Debts 365
discussion by JAMES H. JUSTUS

The Three Beards of Man 376
poem by E. H. TEMPLIN

T. Wolfe of 10 Montague Terrace 377
book feature by ALLADINE BELL

Ethics in Transition 391
review by VIRGINIA HELD

German Nationalism: An Autopsy Report 396
review by ANDREAS DORPALEN

Editor's Shop Talk

Norman Friedman (page 315) makes a good case for literary criticism as a useful tool for broadening the understanding and appreciation of the average reader rather than, as sometimes seems the case, a mere word game for professionals. The discussion of this article among the editors helped us crystallize some of our own views on the place of literary criticism in this magazine.

As a journal broadly concerned with the humanities and social sciences, literature is certainly within our purview. But we are submitted more articles on literary topics than we can use—more, in fact, than on any other single subject. Either students of literature are more facile writers than those in other fields or writers feel that literature is a more universally interesting subject than, say, political science or philosophy. How do we make up our minds which to accept? We seem to have developed a few rules of thumb.

(We are speaking, of course, of major articles, not Books section features, which are another story. In fact, we often judge a manuscript to be not of the calibre of a major article but an acceptable Books feature; evidently we allow more specialization there than in the front pages.)

First, we are more interested in the content than in the form of literature—in so far as these can be separated. In other words, we are not a medium for explication, textual analysis, exegesis, or stylistic dicta. We have nothing against these professional concerns except that they *are* the concerns of professionals, and

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there are many good journals devoted to these matters exclusively. The concern of literature is man and his society and it is that aspect of literature which interests us. Society was the topic of both Oscar Wilde and Theodore Dreiser; what they had to say about it fascinates us more than discussions about the grace of one and the clumsiness of the other's use of words, even though these abilities affected what they could say.

From this develops a preference for articles that deal, not with an author as a lonely creator or a book as a free-standing piece of art, but with a writer and his work as an outgrowth and reflection of the society which gave them birth. An author writes a poem or a book to mirror, to criticize, to speculate upon life as he sees it; his work is the effect of his life, his society. And some books in turn affect the society for which it was produced. It is this interaction of life and literature that holds more interest for us than literary lives alone. In other words, who wrote Shakespeare's plays is less important than what they tell us about Elizabethan thought.

It would follow, then, that we are interested in articles about books and writers that are "important"—or that the articles' authors can convince us are important—as purveyors of ideas or viewpoints worth pondering. *The Brothers Karamazov* is important as a statement of a philosophy; the phenomenon of *Peyton Place* may be important as a clue to the American psyche in the fifties.

Importance, however, is not always a good editorial yardstick. We do not doubt the stature of *Moby Dick* or Faulkner or Robert Frost or *Pride and Prejudice*. Neither, apparently, do many writers of literary criticism. But as editors we feel that few new insights are going to result from much more writing about these figures in our day.

And that—"new insights"—is our final point and leads us back to Mr. Friedman's article. What we like in literary criticism articles, in short, are those that make us want to read the books under discussion, or, more often, go back and reread them with new understanding.

That is our ultimate criterion. Like many such, it is not very explicit and it reduces itself to a subjective judgment. And like most editorial rules, it is subject to amendment by the first good article that doesn't seem to fit it completely.

* * *

Our literary criticism article for the next issue fits these criteria nicely. "On Decoding Humor" by Judson Jerome is an invitation to attune the ear, when reading poetry, to the possibilities of humor, irony, and more subtle shadings of tone in order to more fully hear the inflections of the author's meanings. A quick tour through some seventeenth and eighteenth century examples demonstrates the utility of this unique approach.

Also in the Winter issue will be one of our rare looks at the field of psychiatric theory. "Mental Health, Behavioral Science, and the Humanistic Tradition" by Edward Joseph Shoben, Jr. is a study of some of the distortions in the rigidly psychiatric view of man and how the humanities may help better focus the picture.

James Madison and T. V. Smith: A Study in the Politics of Privacy

By RALPH L. KETCHAM

> I wanted to be a cowboy. I told father on the way home. He chuckled and said no I didn't. . . . Father briefly explained that their lives, their food, and their sleeping accommodations were outlandish and slummy. They lived in the wilds, he informed me, and they had practically gone wild themselves. "Put your cap on straight," he added. "I'm trying to bring you up to be a civilized man."
>
> I adjusted my cap and walked on, thinking over this future. The more I thought about it the less I wanted to be a civilized man. After all, I had had a very light lunch, and I was tired and hungry. What with fingernails and improving books and dancing schools, and sermons on Sunday, the few chocolate eclairs that a civilized man got to eat were not worth it.—CLARENCE DAY, *Life with Father*.

■ What is there about the youngster's reaction to his father's utter confidence that he was the best judge of the kind of life a boy should lead that strikes such a sympathetic chord in the United States? What is so uncongenial to Americans about the tyranny of "improving schools" and wearing one's hat straight? In plainest terms, it is the suppression of the lad's individuality. The regimentation of civilization, especially in its collective aspects, has always made us somewhat uneasy. This reaction, which has found such varied expression as the restlessness of Daniel Boone and the current unwillingness

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RALPH L. KETCHAM is well qualified to discuss T. V. Smith and James Madison. As Associate Professor of Citizenship and American Studies, he is a colleague of Smith at Syracuse University, and he has been editor and presently is editorial consultant for the University of Chicago's compilation of *The Papers of James Madison*. He has written widely in historical, philosophical, and more general reviews.

of Americans to patronize public transportation, has an established place in accounts of American character. There has been a similar general acknowledgment that it imparts a special flavor to American politics. Such shibboleths as "the federal system," "inalienable rights," and "private property," are associated with the commonplace, rambunctious impulse of Americans to say "I wear my hat as I please," yet the connection between the rather general and abstract terms of such documents as the Declaration of Independence or the Bill of Rights, and this specific desire of Americans to run their private lives as they please has seldom been expressed explicitly in American political thinking. Jefferson, Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt have to a high degree personified this rather anarchic tendency, but the rationale and its persistent meaning in our public life have received little exposition. What, exactly, are the political tenets of a way of life devoted to individuality? What can be said about government in America when human dignity in its everyday meaning is placed at the nexus? What political system will give individuals the widest possible scope to live as they please?

James Madison and T. V. Smith, both philosopher-politicians, provide particularly fruitful opportunities for seeking answers to these questions, and their actions most nearly express what we may call the politics of privacy. Madison, co-author of the *Federalist,* was most famous for his part in framing and expounding the Constitution which is still the law of the land. He held public office for nearly forty years and throughout the period reflected and wrote on the fundamental problems of government. T. V. Smith, the theorist of compromise, is a philosopher who has had an active career in politics. He followed two terms in the Illinois State Senate with a term in the federal House of Representatives. While in Washington he gained national prominence for his debates with Senator Robert A. Taft. Military government responsibilities in World War II and membership in numerous government advisory groups since have served to enrich his wide range of writings on the philosophy of democracy. The relevant point about both Madison and Smith is that they combined active political careers with a capacity for philosophic reflection on the springs and dynamos of the system within which they worked. No overall comparison between their careers is possible, of course. Madison had an opportunity to play a unique role in nation building

and reached the pinnacle of political power. Smith entered politics as a diversion from his main career as a teacher and writer. Such disparity does not suggest comparison, except insofar as they might both shed light upon significant features of their common concern, the vitality of American public life.

To move to the heart of the matter then, what are the political tenets of Madison and Smith, and how do they provide a rationale for the politics of privacy?

James Madison is most famous as a theorist of government for his authorship of the tenth *Federalist,* probably the most profound and important writing on politics ever penned by an American. Edmund Burke reached the heart of the problem Madison addressed in that wise paper, and at the same time commented on the talents of the Father of the Constitution, when he wrote in "Reflections on the Revolution in France":

> To make a government requires no great prudence; settle the seat of power, teach obedience; and the work is done. To give freedom is still more easy. It is not necessary to guide, it only requires to let go the rein. But to form a *free government;* that is, to temper together the opposite elements of liberty and restraint in one conscious work, requires much thought; deep reflection; a sagacious, powerful, and combining mind.

To Madison, as to Burke, the crucial difficulty of politics was the contradiction between the simplest and clearest meanings of the terms "government" and "liberty." "Government" means restraint, no matter how many thousands of words are used to explain why it is necessary, how it "really increases freedom," and so forth; and "liberty" means just the opposite, doing what one wants, and this too in spite of the reams that have been written about whether people *really* know what they want, freedom through discipline, and all the rest. This is not meant to deny that some activities of government can in the long run increase viable freedom. Traffic laws may be the simplest illustration and the impact of public education and the protection of labor organizations are perhaps more complex examples of governmental action in the interests of freedom. But the first step in every case is law backed up by force—the abuses which suggest themselves are too ominous and obvious to require elaboration. Madison knew that to base thinking about government on some sort of strenuous effort to deny or dissolve this contradiction and danger

was obfuscation at best and treachery at worst. The tenth *Federalist* addresses this problem directly—is there a republican (freedom-preserving) answer to the dilemma of republican (free) government?

Madison's political thinking was always conditioned by a realistic appraisal of human nature. He tells us that

> the latent causes of faction are . . . sown in the nature of man. . . . A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for preeminence and power . . . have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to cooperate for their common good.

These difficult characteristics of mankind—factious, power-seeking, vexatious—make the dilemma of government more extreme, or, to put it another way, it places the frailty of men at the root of their governance. Men need to be governed because they are not angels, and because of their jarring interests. Yet because no one is exempt from these weaknesses and conflicts of will, men are not fit, in any simple sense, to conduct government. As an agency of power, government is more subject to the corrosions of ego and avarice than any other human enterprise. In Madison's words, if privacy is to be protected, "you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place you must oblige it to control itself."

The well-known solution, of course, is the extension of the republic, the complex division of power among levels of government, and a separation of power among the branches of any given level, which we call the American federal system. A number of corollaries follow from this fundamental proposition. Galling complexity is not a hindrance to government but rather a deliberate strategy which endures contradiction and inefficiency in order to maintain the maneuverability so essential to freedom. The Constitution, viewed as the rules of government, must be acquiesced to, even though occasionally it might thwart majority opinion, since any other course is fraught with greater dangers. In other words, the Constitution is viewed as a bulwark against the inevitable effort of those corrupted by power to change the rules to suit their own plans. Compromise must be regarded as normal in politics because no other touchstone would so well distribute the half-shares of fulfillment which is all that can be expected from the public arena.

Having stressed the necessity for a government of checks and balances, one must not be content with a merely negative rationale. That is, simply to say that "mixed government" *guards against human weakness* does not do justice to the Madisonian position. The postive aspect is the *promotion of private opportunities.* If one believes that emphasis upon private pursuits individually defined is the best way to describe the "purpose of society," then that government is best which allows widest latitude to the endeavors of its citizens. Over and over again Madison came to say that, other things being equal, the government ought *not,* rather than the government *should,* because he felt the country was too large and its interests too varied to permit public definition of the general welfare in most instances. To put the matter another way, assuming that the highest satisfactions in human life are private, a limited government is positively more *desirable* than an omnipotent one, in addition to being *necessary* to cope with the passions and frailty of human nature.

With poetic clairvoyance, Robert Frost said recently,

> I wonder who dreamed [the American dream]. Did Tom Paine dream it, did Thomas Jefferson dream it, did George Washington dream it? Gouverneur Morris? And lately I've decided the best dreamer of it was Madison. I have been reading the Federalist papers. . . . Now I know—I think I know, as of today—what Madison's dream was. It was a dream of a new land to fulfill with people in self-control.[1]

The idea of fulfillment in self-control is indeed the heart of Madison's dream for America. It is a kind of enlargement to suit public requirements of the artistic ideal, creative fulfillment with no external control. The artist or writer, if his creative instincts are to have fullest scope, needs to have a sense of going ahead with sheer abandon, with imagination unrestrained, trusting to something inherent in the process to provide balance or restraint. Genuine fulfillment for the artist depends upon unselfconscious and literal freedom in the broadest sense, if we are to believe both him and his critics. Perhaps the novels of James Joyce and the work of the Impressionist painters are the most emphatic examples of the requirement of the creative arts for free rein—yet trusting all the time in some mysterious mechanism, perhaps best thought of as the intellect of the artist himself providing

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[1]Robert Frost, "A Talk for Students," Sarah Lawrence College (published by the Fund for the Republic, 1956) p. 7.

a balance for the emotions, which produces value and meaning out of the unrestrained exercise of creative imagination. It is difficult to imagine a more gratifying or ideal conception of human life than that of abandon and accompanying balance upon which the artist in pursuit of his own fulfillment seeks to depend. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* John Locke enlarged the idea to include the dreams and desires of a wider circle of men:

> . . . the various and contrary choices that men make in the world do not argue that they do not all pursue good: but that the same thing is not good to every man alike. This variety of pursuits shows that everyone does not place his happiness in the same thing, or choose the same way to it. . . .
>
> Hence it was, I think, that philosophers of old did in vain inquire, whether *summum bonum* consisted in riches, or bodily delights, or virtue, or contemplation: and they might have as reasonably disputed whether the best relish were to be found in apples, plums, or nuts, and have divided themselves into sects upon it. . . . It is not strange nor unreasonable that men should seek their happiness by avoiding all things that disease them, and by pursuing all that delight them; wherein it will be no wonder to find variety and difference. . . . Though all men's desires tend to happiness, yet they are not moved by the same object. Man may choose different things, and yet all choose right.

James Madison, by emphasizing the primacy of the private life and devising a framework of government containing inherent checks and balances, has endeavored to provide for society at large some of the same freedom from external restraint and opportunity for all men to choose differently. In public life as in private, it should be kept in mind that since coercion and external restraint are the negation of freedom and creativity, those who demand liberty and fulfillment must have an implicit self-control that emerges from the creative process and thus is the least possible obstacle to it. Inevitably, the projection to the political arena involves limitations which may not be necessary on an individual basis, but the ideal is that of the artist and mystic—fulfillment under self-control. As Thoreau put it when asked how he could justify his disrespect for some of the laws of Massachusetts, "the absence of external restraint implies the strongest kind of internal restraint."

In his widely read book, *The Democratic Way of Life,* T. V. Smith expounds a relationship between the traditional trilogy of

values—liberty, fraternity, and equality—which lays bare the core of his political thinking. He holds that the impulse toward liberty is unsafe when left alone because of its tendency to degenerate into license. That is, if one were to say "liberty is the only indispensible watchword in guiding men's lives," it would get out of hand, and impositions, anxiety, and strife would be the result. Likewise, fraternity, thought of as the desire to feel the bond of brotherhood with other men, if left unchecked leads to a fanaticism which insists upon comradeship even at sword's point or the threat of the guillotine. The overpowering drive for fraternity (in itself a noble and desirable thing) overlooks human differences and is in danger of starting down the treacherous road whereon some men clasp other men to their bosoms and, with great pity in their eyes and love in their hearts, force the embraced comrades to be brothers. Indeed it is clear, says Smith, that liberty and fraternity are antithetical to each other if left pristine and unsullied by less elevated concepts. What can moderate between them and thus permit the joys of each and prevent the strife of license and the suffocation of fanaticism?

The ideal of equality, lacking itself the substantive moral beauty of liberty and fraternity (slaves are equal to each other), is the touchstone which saves the other parts of the trilogy from destroying themselves and each other. How free should men be? Equally free. How much fraternity is desirable? Equal fraternity. That is, all men have the same claim to the life of freedom. Thus, one man's exercise of freedom must submit to the equal claim of every other man to the same exercise. Now the sad fact is that this does entail some loss of freedom for everybody; there is no sense to Rousseau's effort to find the place where men live together and still "remain as free as before," in Smith's view. Likewise, those who wish to make other men their brothers must recognize the right of other men to choose their own fraternity. The joy of comradeship, in other words, must endure all the frustrations which the fact of human diversity and the moral necessity of equal choice impose upon it. In its relation to both liberty and fraternity, then, equality acts as a sobering restraint, which like many such unexciting devices gives great practical support and definition to the beauties it restricts. Equality is the truant officer of liberty and the haven of heretics from the compulsion of fraternity.

When one moves with Smith from philosophy to public affairs,

compromise, that bane of all true believers, looms up in all its theoretical ugliness and practical greatness. In politics, where the differences among men set various liberties and fraternities in noisy and irreconcilable strife with one another, the accommodation of compromise is the only refuge of peace and sanity. Indeed, as Smith has often said of his former colleagues in the Congress, those with the intestinal fortitude to "sublimate" their own consciences and dirty their hands with the low business of compromising everybody's ideals, achieve a kind of spiritual greatness which can only be enhanced by the calumnies they endure from those with weaker stomachs and purer hearts. Thus, two long-time leaders of the House of Representatives, affectionately referred to by Smith as "Mr. Sam and Mr. Joe," low-brow politicians though they undeniably are, rank as great heroes of the democratic way of life because they accomplish with infinite skill the frustrating business of giving everyone an unsatisfactory half-portion of what he wants.

But lest the rigors of compromise seem too base, Smith, who is always a philosopher and more often a moralist than his critics will admit, insists upon infusing the process with what he calls the spirit of sportsmanship. Now this means, plainly and simply, that unless men approach the job of compromise with feelings of good will and an attitude of fidelity toward the institutions and mechanisms to which they are accustomed, no amount of perseverance in the calculus of give and take will suffice. In a sense, Smith is banking on the moral sense of individuals and the accumulated habits of taste and good manners to lubricate the otherwise abrasive process of compromise. It is well to remember at this point, too, what Smith speaks of as revery and his devotion to poetry as an expression of human aspiration and inspiration. It is to the realms of thoughts and hopes and dreams that Smith has always looked for the most important fulfillment of man's nature. The innuendos of feeling and the excitement of ideals pursued are the stuff out of which man's highest satisfactions are formed. Thus the poet outranks the philosopher or the politician as a spokesman for humanity, and it is this realm which affords the justification for the struggles of survival which go on in less elevated spheres. The politics of privacy for Smith, then, is a method of accommodation devised to protect the huge area of freedom required by the diverse talents and interests of mankind.

Another approach to the politics of privacy, especially fruitful in the present case because of the spirit of moderation and equanimity which usually emanates from Madison and Smith, is the examination of the phobias of both men. Who aroused them to rancor and scorn? What kind of doctrines were most contemptible to them?

In Madison's case, his habitual reserve and tendency to find somethink worthwhile in the things he read makes his intellectual enemies difficult to identify. As he approached the end of a long life devoted to humane and practical efforts to cope with the problems of public affairs, however, he showed little patience for the ideas of two Englishmen of good will, Jeremy Bentham and Robert Dale Owen. In 1811, Bentham sent President Madison a forty-one page letter outlining his idea to draw up "a complete body of law; in one word a pannomian" for the United States. What Bentham had in mind was nothing less than the reduction of the complex of English common law derivatives, Colonial statutes, state laws, federal legislation, and customs having the effect of law which existed in the United States to a single, rational system. Here was a plan conceived on the grandest scale. Madison's general reaction is no doubt suggested in his failure to answer the letter for five years, but he was more explicit in a letter to John Quincy Adams in 1817:

> The celebrity which this philosophic politician [Bentham] has acquired abroad as well as in his own country, does not permit one to doubt the extent of his capacity or of his researches; and there is still less room to doubt the philanthropy which adorns his character. . . . With all his qualification however I greatly overrate or he greatly underrates the task in which he has been so anxious to employ his intellectual labors and treasures, for the refinement of our code of laws. . . . And I own I find some difficulty in reconciling the confidence he feels in the adequacy of his powers not only for a digest of our statutes into a concise and clear system, but the reduction of our unwritten [law] to a text law.

Although he has used polite and reserved language, it is clear that Madison had no hope that the complex usages of American law and government could be reduced to a simple formula and that he was scornful of Bentham's pretension to the task. Madison knew that free government was too subtle to be expressed in the kind of almost algebraic equations Bentham was wont to use. He knew further that detailed, comprehensive codes usually replaced intelligible contradictions with coercive rationality, a bad bargain for free people.

In a reaction to a different sort of utopian scheme, Madison had little use for the plans Robert Dale Owen offered in the *Harmony Gazette* to abolish human misery through the construction of ideal communities. In a 1827 letter to his young friend Nicholas P. Trist, Madison pointed out that Owen's "panacea" attempted to cure diseases "too deeply rooted in human society to admit of more than great palliatives." The diseases were the familiar Madisonian ones of lust for power, and poverty, both of which he felt came from "nature itself," not from custom or environment as Owen seemed to think. Madison rejected the idea that the "love of equality" could substitute for the "desire for distinction" as a motivation for human labor. He further lamented that "one indelible cause" remained after all efforts to abolish poverty had been taken—"the constant tendency of an increase of [human] number, after the increase of food had reached its term." In short, Madison felt that Owen, like Bentham, was endeavoring to blink away the complex and often onorous conditions of human life and, even worse, that his affinity for panaceas was a distraction from more practical efforts to improve man's lot on earth. No doubt Madison saw the scepter of compulsion behind the sweet dreams of these men, just as coercion has often lurked in the shadows of radiant idealism. Madison depreciated medicine men because he saw too clearly their mania for mass diagnosis and treatment and because he knew too well the slow pace imposed on free men seeking their own patient (not patent) medicine of public improvement.

Since the passing of William Jennings Bryan, only two men, so far as I know, have aroused Smith to rancor—Mahatma Gandhi and Norman Vincent Peale. Smith has debated Darrow and Taft, opposed Hutchins, and in the spirit of Bertrand Russell he has taken up his pen to confound a host of uncompromising fanatics—but only those he counts as the quacks of our day does he disdain. At first glance there seems nothing objectionable about a man who, as a saint to millions in his lifetime, led a nation to independence, and another man who has brought comfort to other millions by pouring generous measures of the spice of modern psychiatry into the already rich though perhaps old-fashioned broth of traditional Christianity. Why has Smith branded these two as the dangerous medicine men of our time?

Smith's observations on the career of the Indian leader were crystallized in his commentary on Gandhi's *Autobiography*. Speaking of the book itself, Smith said, "I [do not] understand how one can fail to be overgorged with the obtruded paraphernalia of saintliness and humility through these pages." Picturing the career of Gandhi as the "outsider" saw it, Smith says that one must imagine "a faddist in food, investing with conscientiousness every dietetic whim, inflicting on everyone else at his mercy each latest fixation. . . . Add to the food faddism every medical quackery from hydropathy to fruitism to fasting, so that nothing is too new, too tenuous, too bizarre to set itself stoutly against the best medical knowledge available," and still the picture of the "saceredotal saint" is not complete. The final crime of Gandhi is that his fanaticism "prostitutes the sportsmanship of our political way of life" by "the bending of others to one's own will and way by threatening to kill one's self if others do not do what one wants or do not desist from what one does not approve." After some scathing comments on Gandhi's way of extortion by self-torture and making a fetish of his own vows (since, Smith adds, "I frankly avow that I do not trust the kind of characters that must maintain themselves on vows") Smith assigns him his proper place with deliberate guilt by association: "That Gandhi's methods accomplished something in South Africa, in India, and even in England may be admitted. So did Hitler's. Gandhi may even have accomplish some permanent good. So did Mussolini. So does Stalin." But, says Smith, "when Gandhi meets Gandhi, there the blood begins to flow."[2]

Smith's distaste for Peale, though perhaps less fervent, is no less profound and deep-seated. The pocketbook, *Live Without Fear*, was written by Smith in large part to combat the successive doses of encouragement to self-delusion served up by the author of *The Power of Positive Thinking*. In his own book Smith suggests it might be more helpful to counsel people to learn to live with their problems and vexations and thus make life deeply though imperfectly satisfying, than to issue endless injunctions to "buck up" and thus convince one's self that life's problems are illusory. At the conclusion

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[2]T. V. Smith, "Saints: Secular and Sacerdotal—James Madison and Mahatma Gandhi," *Ethics* (October 1948) 58-60.

of his New York *Times* review of Peale's latest book, *Stay Alive All Your Life*, Smith commented, "It was my conscience which brought me to my knees, falling without irreverence but against all my secular habits, into his [Peale's] ever-repeated format of prayer: 'O God, don't let thy servant, Norman Vincent Peale, make such easy simplicity of lives not his own. As long as his book is a best-seller, he's going on perpetrating more and more of the same. The critics ignore him, the true-believers adore him, and we sensible men are left impotent between.' "

What was there about Bentham and Owen in Madison's day and Gandhi and Peale in our own which so aroused the ire of those who espouse the politics of privacy? It is precisely this: By proclaiming that a codification of the laws or the establishment of a utopian community would solve the problems of the world, or by seeking deliverance through the cultivation of a saintly fanaticism or an encouragement to "try hard" to believe the impossible, Madison and Smith saw the wolf in sheep's clothing let loose in the land. If the great issues of public affairs can be forever resolved in codifications or utopian communities, then why put up with such vexations as checks and balances? If the path to independence and saintliness does in fact lead through the valley of fanaticism, then is not compromise the worst of sins? Madison and Smith felt that "panaceaism" and easy simplicity poison society on two counts, both most grave. In the first place, the distraction of the panacea-mongers is dangerous to the cultivation of the work-a-day political skills so important in coping with the problems of the real world. Secondly, behind every utopia and every saint lurks the "gentle persuasion" (a phrase of Plato's often quoted by Smith) of the twisted arm or the mailed fist, a theme too often expounded elsewhere to require repetition here. To put the matter bluntly, the utopian and the fanatic each proclaim their intention one way or the other of running other people's lives. Their stock-in-trade is intrusion and perpetration, the twin antitheses of the private life.

But lest it be inferred that Smith has picked out unusual medicine men upon whom to vent his wrath, it must be remembered that his excoriation of the Marxists has been constant and severe. Smith's contempt for the Marxist promise of "hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, to carry on cattle-breeding in the evening, also to

criticize the food" is majestic. To him, the pie-in-the-sky in its own right is objectionable enough, to say nothing of the barbaric methods the Communists condone on its behalf. There is no panacea for the ills of the world, least of all in the sort of totally public revolution the Marxists urge. It is no mere fortuity that throughout his career Smith has proclaimed the treason of the Communists to the very masses in whose name they struggle. How indeed could the love of revery blossom and flourish amid incessant, noisy calls to the barricades of collective action?

In the same vein, and for the same reason, Madison was scornful of Rousseau and Condorcet, the apostles of the twin guide-posts of French Revolutionary thought, the general will and unitary government. Madison was never for a moment tempted away from his devotion to the English tradition of ordered, constitutional government. The claims of Albert J. Beveridge and others that Jefferson seduced Madison with the bewitching doctrines he brought to America from France in 1789 err on two counts—Jefferson was himself by no means swept away by the ideology of the French Revolution, and Madison's mind was far too tough and mature in 1789 to be "seduced" by anybody. In 1792 Madison wrote, referring to Rousseau's plan to abolish war, "A universal and perpetual peace, it is to be feared, is in the catalogue of events, which will never exist but in the imaginations of visionary philosophers, or in the breasts of benevolent enthusiasts."

Writing to that other champion of "mixed government," John Adams, in 1817, Madison remarked,

> The idea of a Government 'in one center' as expressed and espoused by [Condorcet] and his theoretical associates, seems now to be everywhere exploded. . . . It is remarkable that in each of our states which approached nearest to the theory changes were soon made . . . which placed the powers of Government in different depositories, as a means of controlling the impulse and sympathy of passions, and affording to reason better opportunities of asserting its prerogatives.

An emphasis on the uniformity possible in human opinions under the right circumstances, a tendency to over-simplify, and a passion for accomplishment in the most postive sense, all of which stalk the pages of Rousseau and Condorcet, were anathema to Madison. Like Smith, the Father of the Constitution would not pin his hopes for the

good life on collective or public action, but with sagacious perversity he insisted that a calculated inertia in the public councils was generally the price of freedom and privacy.

Another way to seek insight into the significance of the political thinking of Madison and Smith is to reflect on their different places in the chronology of Western thought. Madison accepted with scarcely a passing doubt the natural rights framework of the Age of Reason to which he was heir, while Smith's context is that of the analytic pragmatism which still holds a strong position in our climate of opinion. Even if one overcomes the considerable problem of communicating across such a wide gulf, the matter of finding sympathetic vibrations remains. Did Madison and Smith think about the same problems? Did they share important assumptions and insights? Are there distillations of wisdom that respond to the same litmus? It is noteworthy that both Madison and Smith were in some sense uncomfortable in the milieu of their respective eras. As has been suggested, Madison was a constant critic of what he considered the excesses of optimism and simplicity which characterized the Enlightenment. Furthermore, as a practicing politician, he saw again and again that human nature was always diverse and often perverse, and thus always confounded the neat patterns of idealism and often repelled good intentions. Madison was in the curious if not illogical position of accepting the laws of nature his age held were both universal and eternal, yet traveling politically the kind of shifting, tentative course which would now be called pragmatic and pluralistic. Thus Madison was half way out of the eighteenth century on his way to the twentieth. Smith, on the other hand, while taking an active part, in the spirit of William James and Bertrand Russell, in the attack on the so-called genteel tradition and the remnants of the natural law theory, has always been a suspicious communicant of the new orthodoxy, socialized relativism. He has examined, criticized, and been objective with the most zealous adherents, but then he has disillusioned them by quoting the poetry of Kipling with a gleam in his eye or extolling the virtues of rugged individualism and unashamed patriotism. In a sense, Smith's emphasis upon the unsurpassed value of revery has kept his head in the clouds, where, he would insist, it *ought* to be if life is to realize its grandest dimensions.

Madison, then, came down from the heights of immutable natural law, and Smith has gone up from the valley of compromise and relativism, and they meet on what may be a plateau of sagacity. They have learned to live with the perhaps inconsistent dualism which insists that the splendid pleasures of privacy (a kind of personalized theory of natural rights) can be preserved for mankind through the ignoble devices of warring factions and compromise.

To emphasize this dualism, consider the relationship of both Madison and Smith to the great builder of the phenomenal and transcendental worlds, Immanuel Kant. Although he was a generation older than Madison, it was Kant who worked out the philosophic critique of the Age of Reason. Madison, who never formally abandoned the Enlightenment world-view, and who apparently was ignorant of Kant's philosophy, was nevertheless impressed with the same weaknesses Kant dismantled in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. After discussing the "finiteness of human understanding" and the inclination of men to find eternal verities in faith rather than reason, Madison remarked in 1825 that "in this comparative facility of conception and belief all philosophic reasoning on the subject [of the existence of God] must perhaps terminate." In other words, Madison agreed with Kant that sense impressions and logic could not fulfill the highest aspirations of human nature—to answer the great questions of God and immortality men turned to "belief" (faith), not "conception" (understanding). Kant certainly made far greater efforts to resolve and rationalize the problems involved in the dualism of the phenomenal and transcendental realms, but perhaps in the final analysis his goal is similar to that of one who provides in a practical, sensible way for the conduct of public affairs (the phenomenal realm) in order to leave the widest possible scope for the more private world of truth, goodness, and beauty (the transcendental realm). Madison undertook in his practical statesmanship to create a framework for governing society which would not violate Kant's Practical Imperative: "So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as a means only." Madison endeavored to transmit this ethical imperative to society at large—what is a free society for, but to allow individuals to be treated as ends? Just as Kant, the German, was turned by his country from politics to philosophy to make his

contribution to freedom, Madison, the American, was pulled from the study by events in his country to assist in making freedom the touchstone of a nation. Both operated from the same ethical base. Curiously, it is likely that Kant would have abhorred Madison's factious politics, just as Madison would have had little patience with Kant's architectonic philosophy. But the affinity between the demand of the Practical Imperative and the intent of the tenth *Federalist* is striking—they both postulate freedom under self-control.

Both Kant and Madison, interestingly enough, felt that this self-control received crucial support from the existence of personal morality in the society. Although their specific ideas about the substance of this morality and the means of its nourishment were vastly different, they agreed that the conduct of public affairs received an indispensible infusion from the values sustained in the hearts and minds of the people. Indeed, this dependence establishes another link between the encouragement of private fulfillment and the life of society at large. The common weal demands a citizenry imbued with conscience if the attempt to define and pursue the public interest in any comprehensive sense is foresworn. Conversely, the vitality which the nourishment of conscience requires may receive widest encouragement under a government conducted according to the maxims of the politics of privacy.

And who more than Smith has insisted upon the categorical necessity of treating all persons, including one's self, as ends? Why else must public life be compromised, but to ensure the enjoyment of (every individual's) revery? Why also has Smith always stopped far, far short of the plans and hopes of the social engineers? In his little book on the three-fold wills of power, perfection, and piety, the will to piety (or the search for private, spiritual insights) is placed at the unbounded apex of the hierarchy of human motivations, while the wills to perfection and to power are kept near the base where they can be surrounded on every side by battlements (called compromise) which will prevent potential tyrants, while striving for power or perfection, from treating men as means, not as ends. And again, curiously, Smith has never counted Kant as one of his philosophic heroes. Yet, if one must cloak the ways and wisdom of Madison and Smith with some mantle of abstraction—and the chains of coercion clank ominously under that mantle—then Kant's Practical

Imperative serves very well indeed, while also in some way relating Madison and Smith to the main currents of Western thought.

To summarize, the politics of privacy can be reduced to a few brief assumptions and some propositions which follow from them. Perhaps most basic is the assumed fact of human diversity, wherein, as Locke put it, "men may choose different things, and yet all choose right." As might be expected, within this diversity one finds great latitude in the wisdom and virtue of different individuals. Men act badly enough often enough to require mechanisms of government at once firm and elaborate, yet there is sufficient honor and intelligence in the human race to permit self-government as an alternative to the law of the jungle holding sway in public affairs. Especially significant for politics and most to be guarded against is the abuse which is always the result of unrestrained power in human hands. Furthermore, in what is both another assumption and a corollary to the diversity postulate, the politics of privacy holds that private occupations are the most significant and rewarding of human endeavors. It is a corollary because if the diversity of human nature is taken seriously, then planning on a grand scale for the happiness of mankind, especially under the auspices of government which has unique powers of coercion, becomes fraught with the gravest dangers. Undeniably, there are circumstances which require that the dangers be faced, but one would be unwise to view these occasions as other than necessary limitations on the nobler goal of personal fulfillment where individuals are as much as possible left free to develop their own peculiarities.

Furthermore, the politics of privacy assumes, appealing to common sense and general observation, that the most precious enjoyments and loyalties of most men are found in such things as spiritual and aesthetic insights, family and neighborhood pleasures, avocations and vacation interests of all kinds, occupational pursuits of a bewildering variety, and the devotion and fulfillment attached to a myriad of voluntary organizations from churches to bowling teams. If this observation is sound, then the injustice of any theory or scheme which denies men the right to decide their own private pursuits (i.e., be ends in themselves) is very plain indeed.

No doubt this emphasis upon personal idiosyncracies and consequent neglect of social responsibility and action sounds dangerous,

foolish, and old-fashioned to many in the face of population growth, technological change, the cold war, nuclear weapons, and other matters that dominate public affairs in the twentieth century. This may be another way of saying that the traditional values and virtues of individualism cannot endure in the face of the facts of modern life. Those who hold this view emphasize the need for concert of action, inculcation of a collective social responsibility, and a reorganization of American politics along more rational and efficient lines. In reply, the politics of privacy asserts one thing and hopes another. It asserts that freedom, as it is defined in the Anglo-American tradition, is still the *summum bonum* of human government. Within this imperative, there is no need to de doctrinaire about what public action may or may not be required in any specific crisis, but the purpose of the collective action, to enhance individuality, should not be lost sight of. The hope is that the conditions of modern life are not so altered as to make the goal irrelevant or unattainable. If this hope is indeed a vain one, then the revolution required in the fundamentals of thinking and acting is so great that in the United States, at least, the barest beginnings have not been made. It seems at least possible that the mid-twentieth century is in some small way a victim of the perennial (mis)apprehension that its problems are perilous and different enough to require all sorts of radical alterations. Perhaps it is fair to say that the problems of governing men are much the same; it is the terms and factors of the equation which have changed. If this is the case, then what may be needed is *more* emphasis upon making the life of freedom and the politics of privacy meaningful today, and *less* talk of the need for new fundamentals.

To return to the politics of privacy, its assumptions about human nature lead directly to the problem of a government for society which will most enhance the development of diversities in the presence of frailties. Many of the classic patterns of government are excluded by these assumptions about the nature of man. Philosopher-kings ruling a rigid social order would be unsuitable because the human material would not be qualified either to rule or to be ruled. Machiavellian cunning as a basis for government would violate the requirement that men be treated as ends, not means. A Hobbesian tryant would leave society scarcely better off than under the dubious state of warfare existing under no government, because the tyrant would

abuse grievously the absolute power he exercised. And since human frailty must be acknowledged as the author of much of the world's misery, Marx's indictment of society alone would be inappropriate, just as the rules of procedure and control Lenin outlined for the Communist Party are ill-designed for men prone to intelligent disagreement and private revery. What is left, then, is the by now time-honored pattern of limited government under law in which no one who is governed is asked to relinquish his right of participation on the assumption that only he "can tell where the shoe pinches." Indeed, the politics of privacy adds little to the Anglo-Saxon tradition of constitutional liberty other than rationale and elucidation. Madison's concept of factions in uneasy equilibrium with each other when enough of them are thrown together simply adds realistic rationale to the idea of limited government, while Smith's emphasis upon compromise merely makes explicit the inevitable result of any congress composed of free individuals in search of a way they and their respective constituents can live together in peace.

But, one might reasonably ask, aren't squabbling factions and compromise pretty ignoble cornerstones upon which to lay the governing of civilized men? Aren't we declaring ourselves morally bankrupt if we concede that those mean devices are to shape the public councils? In the simplest sense, the imputation is true: the tenth *Federalist* and the theory of compromise are devoid of moral content or spiritual greatness. Three factors, however, operate to relieve the crassness of factions and compromise. Viewed from the outside, the preciousness of privacy, and the freedom required to sustain it, will perhaps excuse leaving the public arena to more mundane measures. That is, if factions in balance and the compromise of cherished ideals will enlarge substantially the liberty of individuals, then perhaps putting up with them is small price to pay. Beyond this is the "spiritual amplitude" (the phrase is Smith's and one he used to describe in superlative terms the stature Madison achieved during his service in the Continental Congress) which comes with honest, frustrating efforts to act constructively in the legislative arena. A man who can see the greatness and beauty of accepting half-measures hammered out in the presence of contending forces, as opposed to the purity of ideals unsullied with compromise but equally unacceptable to men of contrary persuasion, has achieved a kind of

spiritual grandeur. By presiding over the innumerable compromises that are *always* necessary in free assemblies, the politician who swallows his principles without losing his self-respect has performed heroically. He has accomplished the accommodations which are necessary if most of his fellow citizens, bless their principled souls, are to continue in willy-nilly pursuit of their various private occupations.

A final virtue possessed by the politics of faction and compromise is its almost miraculous ability to preserve what Smith has called "the social increment created by human accord" without relinquishing the requirements of privacy. An emphasis upon individuality should not obscure the unquestionable advantage to be derived at times from a concert of action by society at large. This was precisely the point of Madison's vigorous federalism from his days as a college student to the posthumous "Advice to My Country" entreating his countrymen to preserve the Union at all costs. The *Federalist Papers* were a series of appeals to the people of the United States to see and cleave to the manifest virtues of union. Likewise, Smith asks for fidelity to compromise with patriotic fervor because he sees it as the grand secret of national accord. Indeed, rather than being the venomous destroyer of the so-called "general will," the politics of privacy may be the sturdy defender of that concept in the only meaning it has which is compatible with the life of freedom. That is, compromise between factions lubricated by sportsmanship may define the "general will" as well as can be done short of tyranny or the introduction of the esoteric into the governing of men. Perhaps, then, the strife of factions and the pusillanimity of compromise can be acquitted of the charge of meanness if one remembers the purpose for which they are tolerated, the strength of character required of those who operate within their confines, and the practical assist they give to realizing the social increment of human accord.

Lest more novelty than is appropriate be implied, it must be mentioned again that the politics of privacy has had a long and serviceable history in the development of American political traditions, whatever may have been its various vestments at different times. Certainly no one more than George Washington saw and understood the primacy of private endeavors—his repeated withdrawals from public life to return to his beloved Mt. Vernon symbolize

the purpose for which he undertook the burdens of public service that earned him the title "Father of His Country." The empathy Lincoln felt for the suffering of his countrymen as they engaged in civil war was founded on his profound understanding of the blessings they forsook to fight one another. In a different vein, the life and judicial career of Oliver Wendell Holmes is a panegyric on the necessity of allowing individuals and groups free reins in defining and pursuing their own objectives. It was Holmes who reminded his Supreme Court colleagues that the Constitution "is made for people of fundamentally different views, and the accident of our finding certain opinions natural and familiar or novel and even shocking ought not to conclude our judgment upon the question whether statutes embodying them conflict with the Constitution of the United States." It is significant, perhaps, that Madison was Washington's closest adviser during the crucial years of nation-building (1786-1791), and that, along with Madison, Lincoln and Holmes are Smith's favorite heroes of American public life.

The politics of privacy, then, has its roots and meaning in the political experience of the nation. It has found its clearest expositors in two men whose careers, separated by 150 years, are tributes to the realization in American thought and political life of practical ways for vitalizing the imperative to treat human beings as ends, not as means. It is difficult to imagine a higher goal for the art of politics than the humane embodiment of this ideal in the life of a nation. If such is the fruit of the politics of privacy, then its cultivation is indeed a task of the utmost importance for the theorists and practitioners of politics.

The Passing of Bughouse Square

By WILLIAM G. CARLETON

■ America's colorful and zany bughouse squares are on the way out. Before long they will have disappeared as completely as vaudeville, personal journalism, the *bon vivant* of the boulevard, the Bohemian, and the old-fashioned saloon with its sawdust-strewn floor and free lunch. A recent leisurely trip over the country has brought home to me this unhappy fact.

Bughouse squares have not entirely vanished from the American scene, but they are slipping badly. Some have disappeared without a trace, and in those which have survived there are fewer participants, the debates and discussions are less vital and diverse, and in some of them a grotesque exhibitionism proclaims their decadence.

Now, what is a bughouse square? A bughouse square is a public street-intersection or mall or park in a large city where gregarious, imaginative, exhibitionistic, and auto-compulsive "ism" peddlers, agitators, soapboxers, folk evangelists, teachers, showmen, faddists, cultists, cranks, crackpots, dreamers, and self-proclaimed messiahs congregate to impress one another and to display their wares. These performers attract a large number of disciples, camp-followers, hecklers, "wise-guys," honest inquirers, and humble seekers. There is always present a large number of the skeptical and the disputatious. And there is invariably a sprinkling of unemployed, hobos, punks, pimps, faggots, fey proletariat, strumpets, beatniks, and the more robustious and less fastidious of the Bohemians. In short, a

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This article is something of a change of tempo for WILLIAM G. CARLETON who is well known to our readers for his analyses of the larger social and political problems. He is Professor of Political Science at the University of Florida, and his last appearance on these pages was with "American Intellectuals and American Democracy" in the Summer, 1959, issue.

really first-class bughouse square is a bit of skid row, carnival, evangelistic revival, poor man's town hall, and people's university rolled into one.

Bughouse squares have existed since the dawn of urban civilization, from the time some Socrates held forth in a city-state market place to London's amazing Hyde Park of today. Readers of Macaulay will recall his vivid description of a lusty bughouse square of around 1700, London's Lincoln's Inn Fields, where every evening the poor congregated, agitators harangued, and trained bears danced. The prerequisites for a first-class bughouse square have been a concentration of population, metropolitanism, a meeting and mixing of diverse experiences and cultures, and a degree of freedom—cultural freedom even more than political freedom.

Some of America's early city squares became bughouse squares. Independence Square was long a center of popular agitation. Boston's famous Common was at its height in the 1840's when the oddities holding forth there were abolitionists, Fourierites, women's rights advocates, and Amelia Bloomer "in her most extreme costume—not skirts at all but trousers, full and stiff, reaching to her ankles and tied there." New York has had a long and varied history of bughouse squares: first Bowling Green, then City Hall Park in the 1830's and 1840's, then Tompkins Square in the 1870's, when laborites, antimonopolists, and greenbackers held sway. By the turn of the century Union Square was coming into its own.

The most famous of America's bughouse squares during the twentieth century have been Union Square and Columbus Circle in New York, Washington Square in Chicago, and Pershing Square in Los Angeles.

Union Square was in its heyday when I first visited it on the night of August 14, 1916. That visit was the climax of a memorable day for me, a wide-eyed youngster from Indiana on the first day of his first visit to New York City. At that time the Square was not so exclusively political and left-wing as it was to become in the 1920's and 1930's. To me, fresh from a provincial city in Indiana, the spectacle of the Square was outrageously exciting. The nearest thing to it in my experience had been courthouse square on a Saturday afternoon in October of election year, when Indiana farmers gathered

and heatedly debated the merits of Republicans, Democrats, and Bull Moosers. But here in Union Square were many soapboxers, curbstone agitators, and "spontaneous" disputants, around whom were gathered knots of hecklers and listeners, holding forth on the most strange and forbidden subjects: pacifism, feminism, birth control, vegetarianism, the single tax, agnosticism, atheism. The left-wingers were bitterly divided between Big Bill Haywood's Wobblies, Daniel De Leon's Socialist-Labor party, and the Socialists of Debs, Benson, Hillquit, London, and Berger, who were themselves divided.

Since that night, I have always made it a point to visit Union Square on my many trips to New York. I witnessed, in 1920, the protests over New York's Lusk "gag" laws and over the expulsion of the Socialist Assemblymen from the New York Legislature. I saw at first hand the decline of the Wobblies and the Socialists and the rise of the American Communists, and how more and more the Communists took over the Square. From the debates and activities in the Square I was able to follow more intelligently the zig-zags in the Party line, the rise and fall of factions in the Kremlin and how these reflected themselves in the rise and fall of Communist leaders in America. I was on the Square on that astonishing day when the Hitler-Stalin Pact was announced and saw the Communist big-shots, for once at a loss to cope with the situation, slink away from the Square while many of the disillusioned openly wept bitter tears.

Since 1916, the history of the Square may be summarized something like this: gradually it became more political, then more left-wing in general, then more Socialist, then more Communist. With the decline of the American Communists, much of the Square's vitality has departed.

Meantime, a more inclusive bughouse square was developing

farther uptown at Columbus Circle. By the 1930's Columbus Circle had attracted most of the non-leftist activities once centered in Union Square. In this period Columbus Circle was much more like London's Hyde Park than was Union Square. Religion, philosophy, science, literature, and art became leading subjects in Columbus Circle, although no American bughouse square has had the amount of literary and artistic discussion common to Hyde Park. (Skeptics might insist that pseudo-religion, pseudo-philosophy, pseudo-science would be more accurate descriptions of the subjects discussed, but this would not be quite fair.)

At the Circle, at four o'clock on a Sunday afternoon or at seven o'clock in the evening on a week-day, up would go the sawed-off ladders which served as soap boxes, and on the top of the last rung would be hoisted a small flag, cross, or other symbol of the speaker's subject. By eight or nine o'clock as many as ten or twelve ladders would have speakers, around which clustered the faithful, the skeptical, and the curious. The speakers would be variously engaged in expounding Catholicism, Judaism, Methodism, fundamentalism, modernism, agnosticism, atheism, anti-semitism, anti-"popery," free will, determinism, relativity, and so forth. Because the leftists monopolized Union Square, the right-wing came in increasing numbers to Columbus Circle. By the late 1930's isolationists, America Firsters, Coughlinites, Silver Shirts, Christian Mobilizers, Bundists, outright Hitlerites, and sundry denouncers of Jews and "Jewish international bankers" came to occupy a large number of the ladders.

During the years immediately preceding Pearl Harbor, the crypto-fascist allies more and more took over Columbus Circle. Anti-semitism became rampant. However, those they assailed, including the Jewish people, were not intimidated; they continued to appear

Drawings by William Harris

at the Circle. Some of the ladders had speakers who denounced the fascist fringe. The mood became ugly and menacing.

A notoriously vulgar agitator was an expressionless and hard-bitten shrew called Fatima, from the pantaloons she habitually wore. She would march to her ladder surrounded by a moronish-looking claque bearing Christian crosses and American flags. Obscenities against the Jews poured from her as smoothly as water out of a jug, but she appeared completely insensitive and unfeeling, unconscious of the vile rottenness she spewed. Her performance was trance-like, and as so often happens in such instances, it cast a kind of hypnotic spell over her listeners. She usually drew the biggest crowd of the evening, and she attracted sufficient attention to make the news columns of some of New York's leading daily newspapers.

One evening I stood right next to Fatima's ladder in such a way that I could also face her audience. At an opportune moment I broke in on her harangue with one of my own. Appearing to address my remarks to Fatima, my harangue went something like this: "Were you born in New York City? Do you know anything about the rest of the United States? Are you not a New York yokel? Did you ever hear of the Ku Klux Klan? Don't you know that in most of the United States the people who hate the Jews also hate your claque here, the Coughlinites, because they are Catholics? Are you trying to stir up the ugly spirit of the Klan again? When you arouse native American prejudices against the Jews you also arouse them against other minorities, particularly the Catholics. Are you so ignorant of America that you do not know these simple facts? Yet you prate about your Americanism!"

The reaction to my own little speech was mixed. At first the crowd was hostile, then incredulous, then silent, and then on the fringes came hearty applause and cries of encouragement. Fatima froze to her ladder. She became tongue-tied. Then she began to shout shrilly to me to get my own ladder and my own crowd and not steal hers. But the jig was up for Fatima that night. Her claque broke into singing, raised aloft their crosses and flags, helped Fatima from her ladder, and ingloriously stole away. Meantime, I had been surrounded by several dozen supporters, many of them sturdy Jewish youths. They constituted themselves a kind of body guard. They expressed animated gratitude, but implied I must indeed be a pro-

vincial, an innocent, not to know the danger I ran from Bundist thugs. Several of us adjourned to a nearby bar and for hours gloomily discussed the sad state of affairs in the world of that summer of 1940.

To Chicago goes the distinction of giving these folk squares their generic name, for Chicago's Washington Square has long been known by Chicagoans as Bughouse Square. Chicago's Bughouse Square is dark and dismal, forever shadowed by the brooding bulk of the Newberry Library. It has had a greater touch of skid row about it; there you would find more unemployed and more tramps and hobos than in the other bughouse squares of the country. The Wobblies have always been stronger in Bughouse Square than in the other squares, and even today these ghosts of the past are in evidence there.

Chicago has not escaped a certain provincialism with respect to her Bughouse Square. At the height of the summer "season," from about nine to eleven in the evening, "rubberneck" buses would stop before the Newberry Library—sometimes as many as one every ten or fifteen minutes—to let visiting Rotarians, club-women, and college sorority girls from Kokomo, Kalamazoo, and Keokuk gape at the soapbox revolutionaries. The expressions on the faces of the visitors—ranging from amusement, to incredulity, to fear, to anger, to disdain, to disgust—were no less a spectacle for the Square's habitués. The soapboxers took a malicious glee in further horrifying the gapers and would cast outrageous obscenities in the direction of the buses.

By all odds the giddiest bughouse square in the country has been Pershing Square in Los Angeles. There are those unkind enough to intimate that the Square has been but a microcosm of the city itself. Pershing Square has been not only the most colorful and screwball of the folk squares, but it has also been the most unspecialized and most diverse. The bughouse activities which in New York were divided among Union Square (the leftist), Columbus Circle (the rightist and the religious), and Greenwich Village's Washington Square (the Bohemian) were in Los Angeles all concentrated at Pershing Square.

Pershing Square has represented the uprooted, the restless, and the polyglot population that is Los Angeles. People of vastly diverse origins gathered there: native Californians, transplanted Europeans and Americans, Mexicans, and various kinds of Orientals. The

descendants of Kansas and Iowa abolitionists mingled with the Jim Crow boys from Texas and Oklahoma; Southern Negroes became innoculated with the independence and verve of Northern Negroes. The West was always there—cowboys, miners, and migratory laborers.

Los Angeles' famous square has had a larger number of cultists, faddists, fakers, faggots, primitive evangelists, and self-proclaimed messiahs than the other squares. There was more hymn-singing and folk-praying. There was more frivolous heckling. Speakers were interrupted with catcalls and cries of: "Have you had three square meals today?" or "Why don't you hang the hammer and sickle around the Pope's neck?" There were more capers and high jinks. A decade ago there was a Negro youth in turban and red cape who regularly came to the Square to do a ballet, turning off cries of "fruit cake" with banter and smiles. There were players and singers with banjo, guitar, and mandolin. There were cowboys who strummed and sang the plaintive ballads of Arizona mesa and Texas plain. There were those heart-warming community sings in which Negro and Jim Crow buried their smouldering hates and united in lusty renderings of "Dixie," "Old Black Joe," and "John Brown's Body."

Pershing Square was most diverse in its politics and religions. Two decades ago all the well known varieties of Marxism were there, and in addition any number of splinter offshoots never heard of in Europe or Eastern United States, offshoots which represented a strange mixture of Marxism and the American frontier. All the rightist movements of Columbus Circle were there, but the followers of Gerald L. K. Smith seemed most numerous. All of the traditional religions and sects of America, the majority ones and the minority ones, were represented, but there were also Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, Mormons, followers of Father Divine, New Thoughters, votaries of One-World religion, theosophists, Rosacrucians, prophets claiming new revelations and personal miracles, messiahs with the short beard of the Jesus tradition proclaiming their virgin births, foes of "Churchianity," iconoclasts, agnostics, earnest young doctrinaires parroting conventional atheistic arguments, Communists disguised as Catholics better to proselytize for Communism, trollops preaching religion and hoping for worldly adventure.

There was serious discussion of scientific and philosophic matters, too. A decade ago, Pershing Square boasted a rare and natural-born folk teacher. Middle aged, but youthful looking, half artist and half scientist, he called himself Roger Dagan, and he was a cogent popularizer of Dewey's pragmatism and instrumentalism and of Einstein's relativity. He spoke quietly, with clarity, incisiveness, earthiness, and poetic insight. Intellectuals of all sorts, those of the schools and those outside the schools, gathered eagerly for Dagan's lectures and for questions and conversation afterward. Even the faddists, cultists, prophets, messiahs, and primitive evangelists had a respect for Dagan, and there was a legend that he had been invited by Einstein for an afternoon's conversation at Princeton.

Unquestionably, the old bughouse squares, the well known ones and the lesser ones (for almost any city of any size has had a bughouse square of sorts), are now in decline. And the decline has been precipitate, a matter of a decade or so.

Columbus Circle as a center of bughouse activities no longer exists; these activities have been eradicated to make way for "progress."

In Union Square the crowds are smaller and much more subdued, and life has gone out of the discussions. Political debate has degenerated into political gossip, and the names of movie stars and Broadway hits are heard as frequently as the names of liberal and leftist political and labor leaders. The large mass rallies, which once attracted fifteen or twenty thousand of the faithful and the dedicated from all parts of the city to demand some reform or protest some outrage, are now passé. Isidore Wisotsky, writing wistfully about the decline of Union Square, laments that the parking meters along Seventeenth Street, where roaring thousands in the 1920's and 1930's frequently demonstrated and remonstrated, are but robot headstones marking the graveyard of a place which once was the world symbol of free speech.

New York's Washington Square has been "saved" physically, at least in a measure, if you can disregard the intimidating university buildings and tall, slick new apartment houses which enshadow it; but most of its old Bohemian life is gone. Today, a Max Bodenheim would be a curiosity in the Square, no longer indigenous as he and

his kind were in the 1920's and 1930's. For Bohemia, as Robert Dunavan has described recently in *The Saturday Review*, is also in decline, and what is left of it in New York is no longer concentrated in the Village.

Bughouse Square in Chicago is also suffering the fate of Union Square in New York. Few rubbernecks now stop before the Newberry Library, even during the "season."

The decline of Pershing Square is no less real than the decline of the other bughouse squares, although the crowds still gather there, and outwardly there is much picturesque and vivid activity. The Square was "renovated" a few years ago, and parking garages were built under it, requiring the coming and going of unsympathetic citizens who use the entering and exiting escalators. The grassy interior of the park has been closed to all, thus confining the activities to the walks surrounding the park. And—is there simply no escaping it?—canned music now blares from the loudspeakers scattered around the walks. Advocates of rightist and leftist movements have all but disappeared. There is less serious debate and discussion about religious, philosophic, and scientific matters, and what there is has deteriorated in quality. Even the faddists, cultists, prophets, and messiahs have declined in numbers, variety, imagination, and exuberance.

Two things have increased: primitive religious evangelism and sheer exhibitionism. Interspersed everywhere, and at all times, there are the transplanted rural Bible-belters exhorting to "Come to Jesus" and "Get right with the Lord." And there is no end of freakish exhibitionism: the old Iowa buck dressed like an adolescent hipster; the Texas Negro got up like the end man in a minstrel show; the octogenarian Okie with long white hair tied in a knot with ribbons; an extroverted oldster from Nebraska bedecked from head to foot in jewelry, medals, and flags; an aging monstrosity from Kansas with clawing, painted fingernails six inches long. These oddities do not pray, preach, sing, dance, debate, or discuss; they merely parade. This is not vitality; it is sheer vulgarity and senility.

In their decline, all of the squares show the same characteristics, and these are usually reflections of current trends in American life.

There is much less political agitation and discussion in our public squares than there was a few decades or even one decade ago.

Extreme left-wing and right-wing movements have declined in America, and since 1952 America's Democratic-Republican politics have become even more middle-of-the-road and blurred than usual. In recent years, many of the liberals among America's intellectuals have turned from political and economic issues to an examination of the apparently other-directed, non-autonomous, and conformist nature of mass man and mass society. These cultural considerations are more obscure and abstract than the older issues, and the failure of bughouse square participants to take them up illustrates a growing gap between our intellectuals and the folk. (Incidentally, the thesis that we live in a more conformist society may help explain the general decline of our bughouse squares.) Again, foreign policy is more remote and impersonal than the older domestic issues, and the realities of today's foreign policy are far more complex than the old clear-cut issue of whether America should or should not engage in world politics at all. When religion is still seriously debated, it is in terms of the conflict between the old orthodoxy and the rationalism of the Enlightenment, the rationalism translated into American folk idiom by Ingersoll and Darrow. However, our intellectuals have passed on to Freud, the subconscious, the place of the non-rational in life, the interplay of the rational and the non-rational in man. All of this has scarcely penetrated our bughouse squares—still another example of the current gap between the folk and the intellectuals. Teachers like Dagan, who attempted to explain the new psychology and the new physics, have just about disappeared.

In our county-seat towns, too, the old courthouse square is in decline. The days when these squares were centers of social activity, gossip, and community and political debate are almost gone. The benches have come to be deserted; in many places they have been taken away; increasingly court-house grounds are being converted into parking lots. Perhaps we are already close to the day when the word "park" will connote not grass and trees and idlers but merely a place to leave an automobile. Our politicians are discovering to their dismay that Americans will no longer gather at the square for rallies, that this central characteristic of American politics for generations is now passing.

The decline of the public square probably marks a turning point in our social and cultural history. It is a part of the larger movement

toward the mass society, the less personal and less neighborly society. The automobile, the drive-in, the movie, the radio, TV, and the newspaper columnist have taken the place of the park bench, the curbstone, the soapbox, the animated group debate, the Punch and Judy show, the dancing bear, the organ-grinder with his performing monkey, and the hawker of pretzels, hot tamales, sliced cocoanut, and candied melon rinds. Foreign immigration has slowed to a dribble, and the second and third generations of immigrant stock have become Americanized and conformist; they too have taken to the suburbs and become enamoured of creature comforts. There are fewer individualists and eccentrics today, fewer fringe movements in politics and religion, fewer extremes of right and left, fewer devotees of strange and esoteric cults and heresies. Knowledge has become departmentalized and we have become a nation of technicians and specialists. Fewer people seem interested in the larger and deeper questions of the meaning of human existence, the true ends of life—and hence these questions are discussed and debated less. Even those persons who carry on the liberal and humanist tradition have themselves become "intellectuals"—that is, specialists—and there seems to be a growing gap between them as intellectual élite and the folk.

However, we must beware of swallowing whole the thesis that we live in a completely mass society, non-autonomous and evil. It may be that many of those who formerly would have been Bohemians and habitués of the squares now find personal fulfillment in university extension and adult education classes and in today's wider scope for careers in research, the pure arts and the proliferating applied arts.

Nor need we yield as often as we do to the encroachments on neighborliness and personality. In our city planning, particularly in our shopping, community, and civic centers, why should we not encourage in miniature something modestly akin to those snug and cozy little squares, in the past often gems of architectural harmony—like the Piazza Navona in Rome, the Place des Vosges in Paris, Market Square in Brussels, scores of charming old squares in London, and even Mt. Vernon Place in Baltimore and Washington Square in New York? In our current developments, we discourage graciousness and leisure, and as for a bughouse square, people could

not have one even if they wanted it, for sheer lack of a converging place.

For one, as I walk along Michigan Drive or Wilshire Boulevard, stretching relentlessly for miles and miles and flanked by giant skyscrapers, hotels, and apartment houses, I feel intimidated and overwhelmed. Where can I escape for pause, for momentary casual and informal social intercourse, for a moment of affirmation that I live in a personal and manageable world? It is as though we were back to the pre-Western epoch of history, back to the time temples like Karnak and Luxor were built to the glorification of depersonality and the belittlement of man.

An Open Letter to W. B. Yeats

By S. J. SACKETT

This is no country for young men, either,
Bill, let me tell you. It's been remarked before
That the genial currents of the soul can be frozen,
And the chill is descending upon us.

I walked through the streets last night,
And every young man I saw had a wound
In his heart where the sap was leaking away.
I was looking for Innisfree, but it's not on the map.

Head like a cash register, eyes flashing
"No Sale," body by Fisher, hips by
American Can—what strange beast
Slouches toward Madison Avenue to be born?

While this is not S. J. SACKETT's first appearance in print, he has not previously been widely published. He teaches folklore and other things at Fort Hays Kansas State College.

Momma On Mt. X

By ROBERT SWARD

Momma sits there sipping tea, reading
Wordsworth to a spider, and glancing
At the Mobil road-map. I join her.
I am out of breath. *"Five years have past. . ."*
The spider nods, sadly; the spider
Weeps. Momma weeps. I weep. The Forest-
Ranger, the deer, the poison ivy . . .
—"There are martinis in the thermos!"
Says my Momma. The Ranger, Mt. X
Are pleased. As am I. And we sip
Martinis, and listen to Momma.
—"We are thirty miles in the air,"
She says. "But don't you see the turnpike,
How near it is?" "No," says Momma, *"No!"*
Mt. X offers us some gin. "Ah, YES!"
Says Momma. She thanks Mt. X., pours some
And we drink—Momma drools, & goes back
To sipping tea. Just then, the great, jet—,
Three hundred pound ghost
of my Negro, skier-
Father,—dead these seven years,—rushes past.
And then other, large, unidentified
Ghosts. They wave, weep & sip martinis.
Mother is happy, lights matches, sucks
Her thumb. She plays bridge with my father;
She beats him. And he cries. The Ranger

ROBERT SWARD's poetry has appeared in many of the leading American journals. A teacher, he is spending this year "writing, and only writing"—including a residence at the MacDowell Colony. His last appearance on these pages was with a group of poems, "Advertisements," in the Winter, 1957, issue. The poem, "Momma on Mt. X," is a section from a longer work entitled "Flight from Howard Johnson's."

Laughs & slaps him on the back. Poppa laughs,
Sips martinis, eats spiders, Momma . . .
Poppa eats Wordsworth, the deck of cards,
The deer, the poison ivy;—he sips gin.
—I remember him, as a mountain
Ten hundred times larger than Mt. X.
Poor Poppa! I kiss him. He eats me.
And we ski right up the mountain;
Spiders weeping, the turnpike humming
Howard Johnson's in the distance, BANG!
Shooting, firing at us, the searching
Party . . .
the country like a tinted road-map,
Like lined, green death. *Nothing.*—And I love him,
It is good in him, with my Momma,
In my black-ghost poppa, in the flight
From Howard Johnson's.

Wordsworth, Wordsworth.

Song

By ROBERT SWARD

Time gathered, as it passed
in the bird, and the bird
had been climbing
in the air; and time
had been gathered, in the air.

Sino-Indian Relations

By S. CHANDRASEKHAR

■ A country's foreign policy is generally governed by numerous historical, political, economic, geographic, cultural, religious, ethnic, and other considerations; but the main motivation is really enlightened self-interest. Through the centuries, this has been true of every country in the world which has had anything like a foreign policy. However, this does not mean that a nation's foreign policy, because it is governed by self-interest, need necessarily be Machiavellian and bereft of any ennobling idealism. While the government of India conducts its foreign affairs on the principle of what is good for India as the policy makers understand it, there are certain progressive and theoretical principles upon which every foreign policy action is based. We may not always succeed in our aims, and sometimes we fall far short of them, especially when conflicting interests arise; nevertheless, the objectives are there, not as ornamental facade, but as serious guide-posts.

An objective and nonpartisan evaluation of India's foreign policy during the last dozen years will reveal that her efforts have been directed in the main to the promotion of peace, even if peace is negatively defined as the sum total of averted and arrested wars. Whether it is in Indonesia or among the emerging states of Indo-China, in Israel or Korea, Egypt or Tibet or with Pakistan, or in the general East-West Cold War, our singular aim has been to lessen

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SRIPATI CHANDRASEKHAR has reported on his recent travels in Red China in articles in the New York *Times* and for the Associated Press and in a book, *Communist China Today*, to be published in India this fall. Dr. Chandrasekhar is director of the Indian Institute for Population Studies in Madras and is a well-known demographer. His "Family Planning in Rural India" appeared in our Fall, 1959, issue.

international tensions, assist in putting out regional conflagrations, localize conflicts, and act as an honest mediator when invited to do so. We have, I believe, played the useful role of peacemaker unobtrusively and unostentatiously, and without thrusting ourselves into every international disagreement as professional neutrals. And future historians of our times may not be wrong if they conclude that India has been, by and large, successful in her peacemaking role during these difficult years.

This magnificent obsession with peace is all the more significant when it is remembered that India (like the United States of America) has not been in recent decades a bloody theatre of war, as Europe, the Soviet Union, Japan, and China have been. But it is understandable in view of our country's cultural heritage and the unique, non-violent way in which we regained our lost political freedom. For our policy of promoting international peace is not just an abstract theoretical principle which has accidentally commended itself for adoption. It has a deeper national content. It is, in a way, the culmination of thousands of years of Indian tradition—a tradition of tolerance and understanding which we have evolved through the difficult centuries of the cultural evolution which has made us into a successful melting pot of different ethnic, cultural, and religious strains. It is not a hothouse plant, this passion of ours for peace, but an extension of Buddhist, Jain, and Gandhian ideals of non-violence and pacifism.

While it is true that the Indian government does not believe in a policy of non-violence and pacifism (and what government does?), I believe that the average citizen of India is a quasi-pacifist at heart; he has a horror of war and all it implies and believes strongly in a policy of live and let live. It is because of this primary objective of promoting peace which India has so consistently followed that her voice has come to command certain respect and weight in the council of nations disproportionate to her importance on the basis of national income, industrial power, or the strength of her defense forces.

The second major aim behind our foreign policy is to abolish colonialism and hasten political freedom for all subject peoples. Today no argument need be advanced in support of self-government. Political freedom is the birthright of all peoples, no matter what the

stage of their cultural evolution. This policy is also understandable, for our memories of being a subject nation are still with us. And consequently our sympathies are with the colonial peoples in their struggles for political and economic emancipation. While European imperialism has almost disappeared from Asia, the old colonialism in all its medieval crudeness still persists in parts of Africa. And our moral support has always been with the African and other colonial peoples in their struggle for freedom.

Our Good Neighbor Policy is our third general principle. We want to be at peace and live in friendship with every nation, no matter what its internal political system or economic ideology, and whether the country is a neighbor with whom we have close ties and a common frontier or a country as remote as Chile.

It is against the background of these general principles, and in a sense as an extension of them, that *Panch Shila* was formulated. These Five Principles are: (1) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) Non-aggression; (3) Non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (4) Equality and mutual advantage; and (5) Peaceful co-existence and economic co-operation.

While it is true that every issue of our foreign policy is examined on its merits, these in general have been the guiding principles of our foreign policy. And the consistent architect of this progressive neutralism, which draws admiration as well as criticism from both the ideological fronts, is our Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru. The essential correctness and sanity of this policy is underlined when we find that it is sometimes attacked both by the Western democracies and by the Communist countries. The West has accused our prime minister of being a "fellow-traveller" and Russia and China have called him "a running dog of imperialism." Our neutrality must really be effective if we are attacked from both sides!

Neutralism does not mean the negation of ideals. We believe in a democratic, parliamentary, and representative form of government. We believe in all the freedoms of the Western liberal tradition. And among the countries that have emerged free after the Second World War, India alone continues to maintain a democratic and stable government, registering steady economic and social progress. We have neither sacrificed our ideals of freedom and democracy nor jumped into the Cold War in the name of destroying Communism.

How have these general principles of our foreign policy governed our relations with China? Some ancient and recent facts of Sino-Indian relations are worth recalling.

India and China are among the world's most ancient cultures, with much in common in art and literature, religious forms, and social institutions. These two most populous nations of the world are the major architects and inheritors of what may be roughly called the Asian way of life—a way of life that once attached more importance to matters of the spirit and less to material welfare. Both evolved superior cultures which continuously adapted themselves to successive internal dissensions and external onslaughts. But neither India nor China was able to defend itself against the military attacks of Western nations. And as a result, both countries suffered political humiliation and subjection at the hands of European imperialist nations. It was only an historical accident that made India the private preserve of a single power, Britain, while China became the prey of the rival imperialisms of Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and Russia. While India reaped from her political subjection and economic exploitation such gains as peace and stability, a well-ordered administration, and a utilitarian exposure to Western science and culture and British political ideals and institutions, China, in the spurious name of national sovereignty, remained a stagnant and semi-colonial country with neither peaceful conditions nor a stable government. Thus when India became free in 1947, she was far more advanced administratively, culturally, and materially than China in 1949 after her "liberation."

For more than two thousand years India has had some link or other with China, and our relations have been peaceful through the centuries for the simple reason that no area of conflict between the two countries ever arose. Actually, thanks to a 2500-mile rugged and near-impassable frontier running along a most difficult terrain, we have not had too much to do with each other except for the major cultural factor of Buddhism. Buddha has made China our debtor. We sent such dedicated Buddhist missionaries as Gobharana and Kashyapa Matanga to China during the reign of Emperor Ming-ti of the Han Dynasty. And with the export of Buddhism we began to import pilgrims from China. During the reign of Chandragupta Maurya in the fifth century we received Fa Hsien, the

celebrated Chinese pilgrim. Two centuries later, when Harsha was on the throne of India, Hsuan Tsang visited us. Their chronicles are precious sources of Indian history and bear witness to the cultural interflow between the two countries. And though, with the aggressive arrival of Islam in Central and Southern Asia about the tenth century, our active connections ceased, commerce and trade continued to thrive between the two countries. But during the next few centuries each became preoccupied with political troubles and various foreign invaders; and only in recent decades has a new political consciousness and a sense of Asian solidarity emerged. Now we have rediscovered each other under altered and rather difficult circumstances.

Since China's Communist revolution, India not only recognized the new regime but has tried to promote Sino-Indian friendship in every possible way. But peace requires understanding, and such understanding can arise only from respect for, and authentic and reliable knowledge of, each other's way of life. And in this matter, China, or any Communist country for that matter, can never be fair, for they have nothing but contempt for the "decadent" and "degenerate" countries of capitalism. India concedes that China can have Communism or any outmoded system she wants and that it is her internal affair. But Communist China does not really concede that our political and economic institutions are our private concern, and what is more, the Chinese believe that it is their duty to "liberate" us from our bourgeois and reactionary rulers and give us the blessings of "democratic dictatorship." A careful perusal of Communist writings, particularly of the Chinese even after 1947 when India became politically free, reveals that though the Comintern has been abolished, the missionary zeal of the Communists to seek new converts has not lessened. The amount of money, energy, and time the Communist countries expend in other countries in open as well as devious ways to foment discontent, stir up trouble, and lay the foundations for revolution are enormous. Thus, one of the principles of *Panch Shila*—of non-interference in internal affairs—has never really been in effect. While our government knows this, the average citizen in India does not appear to be aware of it.

Secondly, on the question of promoting knowledge of each

other's way of life, China has been less than honest. This is not surprising when we remember that their interest is not in understanding the Indian way of life but in undermining it. China's failure to provide her people with correct knowledge about us is not accidental but deliberate. While Chinese politicians and officials have in the past talked incessantly of "cultural interflow" between the two countries, there is very little knowledge in China of India, her problems, or her achievements. As the Chinese newspapers, magazines, and other mass media are strictly government controlled, this ignorance can only be understood as deliberately imposed on the people by their totalitarian regime. Indian newspapers carry a great deal more news of China than Chinese newspapers do of India. In India there is a continuous coverage of the Chinese point of view even when such views are inimical to ours. Thanks to the Indian Communist Party and its well-known, if not sufficiently appreciated, extra-territorial and supra-national loyalty, the Chinese Communist point of view does not go by default in India. But in China any point of view other than the Communists' is not tolerated.

This lack of news, or perhaps the supply of an occasional misleading item about India in the Chinese press, has not been exactly the best way of promoting "cultural interflow." Major national events have been ignored and some obscure utterance of an inconsequential Indian Communist highlighted. A new factory in formerly Communist Kerala (under India's Five-Year Plans) receives more publicity as a *Communist* achievement than other and much more important happenings elsewhere in India.

I asked a student leader in Peking what he knew of India and her leaders. "If I am right," he said, "there are two Indias. In the North, Capitalist India, Mr. Nehru is the Prime Minister and he is friendly to us. [This, of course, was before the Tibetan revolt and China's assault on India's frontier.] And in the southern half, Kerala, Mr. Namboodripad is the Prime Minister. And the Southern government is a People's Government like ours." And when the stuent was informed by our interpreter that I was from the South, he pumped my hand profusely and welcomed me to the campus most warmly as a fellow comrade! This is only a random sample, but during my travels in China I found this misinformation about India by no means an isolated example. The people were already

beginning to think of India in terms of a partitioned Korea or a Vietnam. It is wishful thinking, but it is there.

When I toured the new and impressive iron and steel plant constructed by the Russians at Wuhan, the director gave me a learned running commentary on all that was going on, and he appeared to be well informed about steel. Later, while talking about steel production in India, he asked me how the steel plant being set up by the Russians at Bhilai was coming along. I told him that it was progressing quite well and was expected to go into production soon. He was full of praise for the "selfless help" of the Soviet Union in starting the first real steel plants in both China and India. I told him that the Russian steel plant was not our first and that West Germany was helping us to build one at Durgapur in Bengal and another was being built at Rourkela by a British consortium. He was very much surprised that India would shortly have three new steel plants, and when I told him that these would be in addition to the three we already have—that the Tatas had been producing steel for the last fifty years at Jamshedpur in Bihar, and that we had plants at Calcutta (Indian Iron and Steel) and Mysore (Bhadravathi), the director looked frankly skeptical. "But I thought the Russians were setting up the *first* steel plant in India!" There was an exchange in Chinese among his colleagues, after which he fell silent.

A similar incident occurred at the State Film Studios in Shanghai where I was invited to a private showing of some Chinese films. Here again the head of the studios knew little about India's enormous progress in the film industry as a *private* enterprise.

This ignorance in China of India's progress raises many questions. The Chinese press, of course, does not say much about our advances because we do not belong to the Communist camp and India's achievements are not the outcome of a Communist system. Numerous Indian delegations visited China and returned to India with rosy pictures of Red achievements; but their Chinese counterparts who have visited India obviously do not on their return to China report any of *our* achievements. At any rate, there is no account of them in the Chinese press.

What is worse, the average Indian citizen has been misled by the reports of Indian visitors to China for, with very few exceptions,

these visitors have presented only one side of the Chinese picture. We have heard only of China's achievements—such as they are—without any reference to the enormous human price paid for them. The curious reason for this appears to be that since our government is friendly with China, no one should say anything against her. Our government is friendly with countless other countries, but this does not seem to deter us from criticizing certain aspects of these countries. An Indian scientist who visited China some time ago confided to me the other day that he agreed with all that I had said on China and that my impressions confirmed his own, but he himself did not want to say such things because they might be shocking to public opinion in India! And I in turn am shocked that friendship with China should mean that we must suppress the truth. We should be all for understanding and co-existence. But the need in a democracy to place truth and one's honest opinion before the public, no matter what the current official and other attitudes may be, cannot be overemphasized.

This indiscriminate adulation of Red China led, as one might expect, to a denigration of India. It became fashionable in certain circles to criticize our government and to show little or no appreciation of the progress that free India has been able to register during the last twelve years. Even outside observers have conceded that we have taken important strides toward providing a better life for the average man in India. But this undue praise of China and the invidious comparison wtih India implied that our free and democratic government with its mixed economy was not able to deliver the goods.

This unflattering comparison of our record with that of China had another ironic aspect. It gave a fillip to the activities of the Indian Communist Party to undermine our government. The Indian government, which was largely responsible for the spread of such a rosy picture of China, can hardly blame the electorate for voting the Communists of Kerala into power. In this sense, our government seemed to be unconsciously working at cross purposes. We were and are to some extent friendly and helpful and full of admiration for the foreign Communists, and the indigenous ones reaped the reflected glory.

As I write, the relations between India and China have con-

siderably deteriorated. For some years now India has been protesting to China against the publication and circulation of certain maps showing considerable chunks of Indian territory along the Sino-Indian and Indo-Tibetan frontier as Chinese. When I was in China I raised this question with some important officials, but I received the uniform reply that these were old maps published during the Koumintang regime and had not been put out by the present People's Government. To my question why, when everything else done during the "Chiang clique" regime had been changed, the present government had not thought fit to publish correct maps, especially as the old maps were offensive to a friendly country, I received no reply. Thus, in a way, the border dispute has been there in a latent fashion ever since the Communists came to power. And it is difficult to understand why the Indian government did not demand from Peking an immediate categorical answer to this question during the days of romantic friendship.

China claims two huge chunks of Indian territory on the Sino-Indian border as Chinese. On the north-east, between India and Tibet, the traditional frontier is based on the McMahon Line. This is the 800-mile border between India and Tibet drawn forty-five years ago at the Simla Tripartite Conference by Sir Arthur Henry McMahon, representing Britain. Now Peking states that this traditional frontier, which has never been questioned before, was never formally ratified by any Chinese government. Peking further accuses India of complicity with British imperialism, as the McMahon Line was essentially a product of British deliberations. It is not the fault of India that the then Chinese government had no time, preoccupied as she was with internal troubles, to register doubts about the border as it was then drawn.

And Peking forgets, of course, that India, as a successor government to the British in India, inherited the duties and responsibilities of the former government. However, should there be any dissatisfaction with the present demarcation of the frontier, a civilized government would be expected to raise it through the regular diplomatic channels and discuss and settle the matter to its satisfaction. But what China (a supposedly friendly China and a China which has been consistently championed by India during the last decade, to the dismay of America and other Western nations friendly

to India) has done is to unilaterally repudiate the accepted, traditional frontier. Peking has not repudiated the frontier for any minor adjustments, but blandly claims some 35,000 square miles of India's North-East Frontier Agency as belonging to China. And China has not stopped with this. She has resorted to violence and has forcibly occupied Longju, the Indian frontier post. This is Communist existence but certainly not co-existence! India has met this Chinese show of strength with patience and restraint and with nothing more than diplomatic protests. This civilized restraint on the part of India is possibly interpreted by China as political weakness.

The second area of the Sino-Indian border dispute is in Ladakh along the 1,100-mile-long Kashmir-Tibet frontier. Here there is no treaty or any formal declaration beyond what time, convention, and accepted usage have sanctified as the border between Indian Kashmir and Tibet. There has never been any dispute about this border in the past, either between the erstwhile Maharajas of Kashmir and the British government in India on the one hand, or the Tibetan authorities and the Chinese government on the other.

According to the government of India, of this 1,100-mile frontier betwen Kashmir and Tibet,

> about 300 miles of the extreme western sector is covered by the territory of Kashmir which is now illegally occupied by Pakistan. The major part of Kashmir's frontiers with China runs along a well-defined watershed, and the eastern section in particular has been recognized by custom for over three centuries. It was also confirmed by treaties signed between Ladakh and Tibet. This boundary includes in India the whole of the Aksai Chin plateau, the Changchengmo Valley, and other areas. However, Chinese maps have been showing the boundary in this area much further west so as to include about 6,000 square miles—the greater part of Aksai Chin and parts of Changchengmo Valley and other areas in Tibet.

What astonishes one is that China at no [illegible]e demanded from India in any formal manner this territory which she now claims as her own. She ignored the traditional frontier, trespassed more than forty miles into Indian territory, and built a 100-mile long road through the eastern part of Aksai Chin. The Chinese now do not just *claim* this huge chunk of Indian area, they have occupied it; and what is more, they are controlling the region effectively enough to arrest Indian parties as trespassers in 1958 and 1959. These out-

rageous actions on the part of the Chinese resulted in nothing more than "polite but strong" protests from India.

Relations between Delhi and Peking reached a crisis when the news arrived at the end of October, 1959, that Indian and Chinese troops had clashed. At Hot Springs in Ladakh district, some forty-five miles from the Kashmir-Tibet border, when two Indian constables of the Indian Frontier Patrol did not return to their camp, a searching party of fifty Indians went out to look for them. From a hilltop, the Chinese troops opened fire without inquiry or reason. The Indians fired back, but they were subdued by grenades and mortar. Nine Indian constables were killed and ten were captured.

This incident is probably the worst clash that has occurred as yet between the Indians and Chinese as a result of the border dispute. It roused the entire Indian nation, which demanded quick and effective retaliation. Newspapers asked for cessation of diplomatic relations. Even leading members of the Congress Party (the party in power) demanded that something should be done to save India's honor and her territorial integrity. All political parties and groups voiced their sudden awareness of this new Communist menace on the nation's northern frontiers. But the Indian Communist Party alone stood out shamelessly true to its tradition of supra-national loyalties and defended China's rights over Indian territory; Nehru pleaded for restraint but promised an angry and disillusioned nation that force if necessary would be used to eject the Chinese Communists who have trespassed into and occupied Indian territory. The 2,500-mile-long frontier from northwest Kashmir to the junction of the India-Burma-China frontiers has now been turned over to the Indian military authorities.

Nehru's trust in the Chinese Communist leaders has been betrayed, just as some of us had predicted it would be, and the Indian government's foreign policy of neutrality and friendship with Communist China has become suspect. Does this mean, in the last analysis, that India's neutral foreign policy has failed? All that can be said is that Prime Minister Nehru, with the best intentions in the world, and with an ardent desire to promote peace, took a plunge in trusting Communist China. The trust has been misplaced, and since these incidents may recur in the future, it is time that India's policy towards China is changed.

These disputes over maps and frontiers are only symptoms; the disease of Communist ideology is a deep-seated one. The real struggle of the future in Asia will not be between India and China as such but between democracy and freedom on the one hand and Communism and its tyranny on the other. Asia's destiny will be mortgaged on the outcome of this ideological struggle. It will be a sad day for Asia if, after a struggle of two centuries, she overthrows European imperialism only to become the victim of another and more sinister imperialism—Communism.

No Wind

By CHARLES FARBER

A red door fires the house
and birds stand three-legged on the window-sills;
a hair sticks up from the bent chimney.

On the lawn the flowers are lollipops,
though the trees have captured snow;
Father stands to one side, a giant insect.

(The way she drew it at five,
licking the crayons—
no wind or pain or death.)

CHARLES FARBER published "Small Sea" in our Fall, 1959, issue. He is a metallurgical chemist whose poems have appeared widely in newspapers and magazines.

The One Excuse

By ALBERTA T. TURNER

Waste to me's the one excuse to weep,
Not in response to need; need may translate
Matter to energy and back. Decay
Needs to fertilize the field for hay;
We need the hardest January freeze
To kill larvae and spores enough to raise
A crop. And even the flagrant waste of flame
Frees the ground to sun again and rain.
And cancer feeds to its own flower and seed.

The waste I weep is waiting in the will,
Under crosses that flood and crest the hill,
In driftwood flanks, in boxes of old keys,
In lilacs that grow alone in fields, in all
Unclosed fences, boarded stands, stone walls
That stitch their patterns through thin second growth,
And all the lidless piles gulls roost on—these—
And the ball of ice cream melting in the street,
The book closed in mid-chapter—these I weep.
And the dry buoy, high upon the beach
Beside the sprung dory—these I weep.

ALBERTA T. TURNER has published poetry in a wide variety of magazines; she has taught courses concerned with poetry; and her Ph.D. dissertation was concerned with the Oxford and Cambridge University poetical miscellanies, 1600-1660. Her last appearance in the *Review* was in 1956. She and her husband teach English at Oberlin College.

The Anatomy of Miss Byrd

By PETER SHRUBB

■ At three o'clock in the afternoon of the first Tuesday in November, almost everyone in Australia except Shirley Byrd stops work. Twenty or thirty horses line up on a fine, green racecourse in the south west, and the nine or ten million people trapped by the sun on Australia's fairly inhospitable brown earth give up all battles and gather by radios—or TV sets now, if they are lucky—to wait for one of those horses to win the Melbourne Cup. Almost everyone except Shirley Byrd has a ticket in a sweep, and even if the nation loses an unbelievable number of manhours that day, many Australians take home with them that night undeniable evidence of profit. I have been in a Melbourne Cup sweep every year since I was a boy of eleven, and I have missed hearing only one race since I was sixteen.

The year I missed was the year I began working for the Department of Lands, in Sydney—the year Bill Wotton and Shirley and I all began there, in fact, though Shirley was the first of us. At three o'clock on Cup Tuesday, Mr. Little and Mr. Bullock and Bill and the rest of them were down near Roberta's desk—Roberta, at Bill's request, had brought in a black and gold beach portable for us all to listen by over afternoon tea—and, just as I came in, Mr. Bullock called out to Shirley to stop her typing because they couldn't hear. Down by the sunny windows at the far end of the long office they turned back to their radio then, and at her desk by the door Shirley

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took off the old grey gloves she used for carbon work. As I came by she rubbed her arm, and murmured something under her breath. She caught my eye, I raised my eyebrows, and she said out aloud, "*Flexor digitorum profundus.*"

I should simply have stuck my tongue out at her and gone straight on—she wouldn't have minded—but although that was the only race I ever knew about, in her presence I was still a little ashamed of it. "*Flexor*, I bend," I said, "*digitorum*, the fingers, *profundus*, deep—*I bend the deep finger*: that's a terrific motto for any school."

Shirley didn't praise my quick ear, or my quick tongue; all she saw, probably, was my resentment, for she only smiled her thin smile, unwarmed and unwarming, and gave me such a brief and quiet explanation that she must have expected me to go as soon as it was over. "It's a muscle in the arm. I type jerkily, and sometimes it aches." But you can't just go to the races and leave someone rotting at home with a broken arm, so I stayed.

I watched her rub it again. I was young and single, but the ideas of anatomy and Miss Byrd had hardly ever before occupied my mind together, and as I watched I tried them out again, seeing how close I could make them come. With no success, though, for at that moment a bell five hundred miles away in Melbourne rang out, rang out all over Australia, and conveyed to all good Australians that the barrier was up and they were off. I began to see in Shirley the Abrupter of Joy and Destroyer of Delight.

In every external detail she seemed qualified—to my malign eye, and at that moment in eternity—for both roles, and worse. She was arid and wide, wider than is common in a young woman of twenty-three, and somehow her clothes absorbed her neck; she always wore large, loose sweaters, like hand-knitted chaff-bags. Her square face was white on the cheeks and pink around the nose, with a small mouth but not a narrow one, and eyes which did not help her mouth by being large, because they were a light blue and faintly sharp, in the way an executioner's axe would look sharp even to a man who did not believe he had done much wrong.

"How do you know that's what it is?" I asked, with limping sympathy.

"Oh, I'm studying anatomy," she said.

"Those heavy anatomy books have been the ruin of many a good wrist."

Everyone except us passed the furlong post. She leaned back and folded her arms; her sweater made a meaningless flopping fold above them. "Oh, no," she said. Then she undid her arms and bent over the bottom drawer of her desk. The irony of it all was that she even came from Melbourne herself, had spent six years teaching nursery there. Out of the drawer she heaved a great monster of a book, and let it thud on to the desk between us. With modest pride she said, "See? It's not so heavy."

I picked it up and opened it. And almost fainted, for there on the page before me was the grey, dead face of Bill Wotton, torn half to pieces. Two thick red worms lay deep in his open neck, and what remained of the face was turned aside to reveal them, wrenched aside so cruelly that it was plain the worms ruled.

Even when I had seen that the figure in fact detailed *The internal carotid and vertebral arteries: right side*, that first reaction was by no means dispelled: the likeness was so compellingly exact, though only eye, nose, and top lip were there to support it. I remembered from school that tombs in ancient cathedrals were sometimes decorated with statues of half decomposed corpses, revolting cadavers placed there during the *lifetime* of the man whose rotting dust lay beneath, as reminders of mortality; if it had been my own face in the book I think I would have been sick.

"What are you looking at?" Shirley asked, a little censoriously.

"Bill," I said.

"Oh, you've found that," she said in a flat and lifeless voice.

We both turned then to look at the real Bill. Down amidst the excitement and life he stood, where I had wanted to stand. *Birth is the beginning of death*, some memory sounded—and warmth but the fever and heat of decay. He had his back to us, vulnerable and unsuspecting, but his face filled my mind—Poor Bill! I thought—and through his large lively figure I saw the cold bone diagram of eternity horribly expose itself.

I put the book down, and Shirley immediately heaved it into her bottom drawer again, and shut it away. "I'm sorry you saw it," she said in her flat voice. "I try not to let anyone see it. I didn't think you would look inside."

I shivered. "It's more than a lesson in anatomy, all right."

She said nothing, looking down at her desk, not moving. I watched her, the owner of that book, and wondered at her dispassion. But then all she did, she did quietly—as quietly, I remembered with shame, as she had once helped Bill himself. When he first came to the office, he told me he was just down from the country, staying in a hotel: I, generous to a fault, told him in return that no one could afford that for very long. Before the end of the week, Shirley, without fuss, had found him a room in the big, old warren she herself lived in on the other side of the harbor; I still felt guilty every time they arrived at the office together.

She was the reverse of me, she was the reverse of us all, she was the reverse of Bill: no hot deterioration warmed her. How beautifully appropriate it was, I thought, feeling my first admiration for her begin, that until my blundering entry she alone had seen the anatomy book; for she was of us all the only one built to bear it. And she was good. She protected Bill, and would have protected me. As if we were worth saving. *She* was worth saving—perhaps she alone: perhaps her dry goodness was the only true goodness, perhaps her dry saintliness was the true life, the abiding spiritedness. Dry, quiet, eternal—you are the true Australian of us, Shirley, I thought.

She looked up, saw my stare, and blushed a little under it. "Have I said something I shouldn't have?" she murmured.

"No," I said.

While I was trying to think what to add to this, there was a sudden explosion of throats down in the sun by the window, and execration and jubilation flew like shrapnel past our ears. The race was over.

That end of the room looked like an unwatched pot. Mr. Bullock and Mr. Little were both red in the face, and Mr. Little, striking himself on the forehead with unaccustomed fervor, was laughing fit to kill. Above him, Alice Wood's brown right arm punched holes in heaven, but behind her, in the sunlight, Diane jumped for joy. Groans arose all around her, and she laughed. Grieving Phyllis and Joan stood up; Phyllis stretched herself, grimacing, as if she were on the rack, and they both went to the window for warmth. Mr. Bullock said, "There there, girls—pay day Friday!" "Oh, oh," they groaned. Mr. Little laughed and said, "What about

me? *I* am the one who deserves sympathy!" "Oh, Mr. *Little*!" Joan said, her glasses glinting in the light, "you were *second*!" "But that's only two pounds ten," he expostulated. "Another neck and it would have been eight!" "Oh, oh," they groaned, and as he began giggling again they collapsed together, heads on each other's shoulders, brown against gold, beneath the window.

Then from the little radio music burst forth. Bill pulled Roberta to her feet and danced her out on to the wide coir mat that ran the whole length of the room. He was obviously still full of excitement, and there were a few laughs from the audience as, once or twice, he caught his heel where the edge of the mat curled up; but neither he nor his partner paid them any attention. Rapt, they swung and circled in the center of the room, not dancing wonderfully well, but keeping good enough time to create, in those circumstances, quite a considerable effect.

They were about as far from Shirley and me as they were from the others, but about as close to each other as could be: it was as much this as anything, I think, that stilled our laughter. But if it was a surprise—and for a minute it did have me, for my part, feeling a little two-dimensional—it was a surprise only at first, or only to anyone who had no memory, or no eyes and ears with which to feed it. Little facts fell together even in my male mind, and all were cemented into certainty by the quiet, smiling eyes of the girls watching from the other end of the room, eyes which may not have known, but had at least guessed.

Then the music stopped, and the dancers likewise. Bill stood back a pace, but still holding his partner's hands, and said, "Roberta, will you marry me?" Roberta caught her breath, I thought, and then smiled; and it seemed to me that her face revealed itself, opened itself for the first time as she blushed, as the beautiful, warm, pink tide flooded up from her throat to her shining face. "I've just won fifteen hundred pounds," Bill said. "It's enough to get started on."

"Yes," Roberta whispered—in that silence we would have heard it even if she had merely thought the word—and as she fell into his arms we all started clapping, cheering, and, if we were girls, crying.

"Now the boy's done for!" shouted Mr. Bullock, looking like a Toby Jug with hypertension as he came forward to shake Bill's hand. "Tell her you didn't mean it, lad! No one heard you—I swear no one

heard you!" And he swung Bill's hand up and down, up and down. It was like the race all over again. Mr. Little had another reason for going red, the girls had another reason for giggling and crying and waving their arms about. It was by no means the sort of afternoon the Department of Lands paid us good money for. "Break a bottle of champagne over his head before he signs anything!" Mr. Bullock cried.

A movement next to me caught the corner of my eye; it was Shirley standing up. To my hot eyes she looked paler even than usual, but I was laughing. "I'll go out and see if I can buy a cake," she whispered, with her twisted little smile. She turned away, and I went forward to offer congratulations and slap backs.

Mr. Bullock saw me coming, looked behind me, and asked, "Where's Shirley?"

"She's just nipped out to get a cake, I think," I said, in a jolly voice.

He was very pleased. "She's a good girl." Then he waved his big hand at me and bawled, "Chase after her, will you, and make it a couple! And something to drink!"

I about-turned and made for the door, hurrying. But I needn't have hurried, for Shirley was not ahead by more than about ten lengths; with her back to me she stood leaning against the white wall in the corridor there, and I was so gratified to have found her that at first I did not even wonder why she had stopped. "Yoo-hoo!" I called. "Memorandum in Bull's blood!" But she did not move.

Even when I was up close to her, starting to say it again, she made no attempt to move, and no attempt to hide from me her eyes full of tears, or the ravages tears had made in those pale cheeks—cheeks which, I now saw for the first time, were powdered. Even when I put one hand on her arm to comfort her, when I put my arm around her shoulders, she did not move.

Wondering what on earth I should do, I sadly watched a tear run its slow course down her long, dry, impenetrable cheek, and shuddered, remembering her book's grim picture. How terrible to believe that life will end! But in my arms Shirley wept and wept, dying to begin.

What Good Is Literary Criticism?

By NORMAN FRIEDMAN

■ In the literary world, this has been called an age of criticism. And indeed, there seems to be an enormous amount of criticism going on, judging by the journals, the books on critical theory, the interpretive and analytical books, the textbooks, and—this is a sure sign—the histories of criticism and the criticisms of criticism, which have been pouring from the presses. You might think that this would be taken as a sign of intellectual health and vigor, and yet the viewers with alarm are sending up a chorus of warnings. And this chorus issues from a variety of individuals and types: great and revered critics, well-known poets, journalists and reviewers, college professors, educated laymen, and students—especially students. Both from within and without the pale do they come, crying woe and harm and doom.

Even John Crowe Ransom and T. S. Eliot, themselves among the pioneers of modern criticism, have complained before large audiences that their spiritual descendants are perhaps going too far. Randall Jarrell and Karl Shapiro, both poets of reputation, have asked for a rejection of what they consider the excesses of criticism. J. Donald Adams has been carrying on for years, on the second page of the New York Sunday *Times Book Review*, what he takes to be a one-man war on over-intellectualized literary interpretation; and I have heard Anthony West, a *New Yorker* reviewer and a novelist in his own right, chiding a group of college English professors for

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viewing their work in too professional a light. The professionals, in turn, have developed an astonishing defensiveness about their work and would almost rather reveal their bank accounts in public than their critical assumptions—and this goes even for those among them who are engaged in writing critical theory. I remember with sadness the storm of confused protest which greeted John Ciardi's analysis, in the spring of 1958, of Frost's "Stopping by Woods" in the *Saturday Review*. And students: well, they come in all shapes and sizes, but one thing they almost all agree on is that their spontaneous impressions of a work are sacred and not to be tampered with.

Now I am not going to say that all of these people are the same or that they are all wrong. There is, of course, no point in disputing the fact that criticism and creation are two different sorts of activities, or even that it is possible for an excessive intellectuality to dampen one's appreciation of the richness and complexity of the literary experience. Critics do sometimes go too far, and much criticism being published today is dull, repetitive, mechanical, pedantic, and unimaginative. It is certainly harmful when a writer falls under the spell of a powerful critic to the detriment of his personal creative impulse; no one critical theory as to the nature and function of literature should dominate the field, for artists must be allowed to work out their own visions and revisions. It is obvious that criticism, in relation to creative literature, is subordinate and should remain so: critics must follow writers and not vice versa. It is beyond dispute that a critic needs taste and sensibility, that he should be emotionally and imaginatively engaged in the works he interprets, and that this engagement is more a matter of temperament than method.

But when all this is conceded, and justice has been done to individual men, modifications, emphases, and positions, there still remains at the bottom of much of this dispraise a large residue of just plain hostility to taking the study of literature as an intellectual discipline at all. The attack on the abuses of reason frequently turns into an atack on reason itself. The application of rational method and of systematic inquiry to literature is variously viewed by laymen and professionals alike either as an elaborate but idle chess game, involving strategies and excursions of interest only to the players, or as a cold and unfeeling dissection machine designed to break butterflies on wheels. Critical theory is seen either as having no important

consequences or as having consequences which are positively harmful. It will be my purpose in this paper to show that consciously reasoning about literature in its several aspects does have important consequences and that these are not necessarily bad—indeed, that they may be positively useful and good.

I

Before trying my hand at this rather unpopular task, let me inquire into some of the reasons underlying that hostility I have just outlined. There are, first of all, objections to the reasoning faculty itself, no matter where it may be applied. Think, for example, of the age-old association, as found in the Bible and religious doctrine as well as in certain conservative political theories, of Knowledge with Original Sin. There are things which man either can't know or shouldn't know, and it is a manifestation of hubris or pride—as symbolized by the archetypal figures of Prometheus, Lucifer, and Faust—for him to try. Or, if they can be known, it must be through the heart rather than the mind. But it is something close to heresy to claim that anything can really be known, for the universe and man's place in it are heavy with mystery and pervaded by wonder. So go ahead with your categorizing and your logic-chopping, but you will inevitably miss that which you seek—that which is beyond all systems and contrary to all methods. When all is said and done, it is better to be good than clever.

Then there is that seemingly outmoded medieval debate between Nominalism and Realism. The former doctrine held that nothing except the raw data of experience may be known, while the latter claimed that our knowledge of relations among these data may be just as real as our direct physical perceptions themselves. This is a dialectic which is so old and which has taken so many different forms that it must be rooted in human nature itself. Since the pendulum seems to be swinging in the direction of the nominalists of today, all I really want to do is redress the balance a little. If reason can be said to be limited, I would like to suggest that we won't know where those limits are until after we've tried to find them.

Or again, there is in our own day the doctrine which some have made out of Freud's ideas about human conduct and motivation.

Naturally, people always knew that their actions and beliefs were not governed exclusively by reason, but it was not until Freud that they realized how pervasive the influence of the irrational really is. What a puny and insignificant thing is our reason, then! Only the smallest observable portion of a great submerged iceberg! But it was not Freud's conclusion that we ought therefore to surrender to our submerged selves; quite the contrary, his whole method of treatment and cure was to reinstate the role of reason in the psyche. Thus, while it may be admitted that reason plays only a small part in the total drama of our lives, that is not in and of itself any necessary cause for bending our efforts toward reducing that already small role to nothing. If logic is fallible, so too is the heart; if we can rationalize our prejudices by reason, so too can we emotionalize them by feeling. If man's intellect can be used for evil purposes, so too can the imagination; the heart can hate, it seems, and the soul can destroy. I know of nothing in logical principles which demands that we make up our minds before considering the evidence or that we mistake the abstract for the concrete; in fact, the study of logic tells us, if we would listen, that these procedures are fallacies—human errors, errors of prejudice and haste and impatience and emotion, the products of *un*reason rather than of logic.

But one may agree that the application of reason is justified in certain fields and claim, nevertheless, that it is wholly out of place in literary study. There is, for example, the fear that analysis destroys the pleasure one feels in experiencing a poem, a story, a play, or a novel. This pleasure is immediate and primary, whereas reason is mediate and secondary—thus reason impedes the progress of pleasure. If you like it, this argument runs, then don't think about it, for if you do, you might not like it any more. "We *teach* mathematics and chemistry, but plays written for sweaty groundlings . . . surely they were not written to be studied but to be enjoyed. We do not study a chocolate nut sundae." Thus speaks a one-time president of the Modern Language Association. But do we really think that our pleasures are so frail as to disappear under analysis? Or that the powers of literature are so weak as to be so easily crushed? Or that we cannot think about our feelings? Or that thinking itself cannot be a passion and a joy? Perhaps the actual pleasure which is at issue here is that of laziness—the pleasure of remaining content with one's own private opinions.

Another reason has its origins, I fear, in a certain amount of snobbism from which some students of literature are not wholly free. I mean that desire to be donnish and graceful and sophisticated which seems to have rubbed off from the atmosphere of certain venerable universities in England. This is an attitude which resembles the aristocrat's necessary distaste for getting his hands dirty, for understanding how things work—to do so is for the mechanic, the hired hand, the man who has to earn his living. Many British critics seem more concerned with retaining their amateur status than with criticism itself, so often do they apologize for what they are doing and so frequently do they disclaim any theoretical or systematic intention. It is almost amusing, for example, to watch E. M. Forster, writing a serious and influential book on the theory of the novel, as he apologizes: "How then are we to attack the novel . . . ? Not with any elaborate apparatus. Principles and systems may suit other forms of art, but they cannot be applicable here—or if applied their results must be subjected to re-examination. And who is the re-examiner? Well, I am afraid it will be the human heart. . . ."

Underlying this attitude, there may be a distrust of institutions, a hatred of formalization, a fear of regimentation. "That government is best which governs least" is analogous as a political principle to "that interpretation is best which theorizes least" as a literary principle. Method, system, logic—these comprise the bed of Procrustes into which theorizers are wont to force literature, and it is this bed which cuts off the very life and value of literature. "One does not enhance a rainbow by subjecting it to a spectometric analysis," writes one of the many readers who objected to Ciardi's essay on Frost. Philip Wylie said it reminded him "of a humorless pathologist slicing away with his microtome at a biopsy." But, it may be answered, just as man apparently cannot get along without some sort of institutions, neither can he get along without some sort of approach to literature. A humorless system may indeed come between him and a poem, but without some sort of a system he will never get to understand that poem at all.

The poet, who might be supposed to speak with a voice of special authority in this matter, may even himself warn us against criticism. Of course, a bad poet may simply not want to be exposed, but many good ones don't like analysis either. They know that a poem is created out of obscure impulses and profound feelings which are

beyond their conscious control or our logical analysis. They have, furthermore, a vested interest in their creations which they try to protect by shying away from interpreting their own work: they want the reader to be able to grasp their intentions on the basis of the work itself, because this would be a vindication of their efforts, and they want their work to retain whatever subtle energies they have managed to place in it rather than see their complexities reduced to simplicities by the over-zealous critic. But of course a poet, in so far as he writes successful poems, is a critic too. He knows—whether intuitively or consciously—when he's done his best with a given work; he's the one who decides how it should go and when it is finished. And, just as poems do not get written by themselves, neither do they interpret themselves.

II

I would like to crystallize the point at issue in terms of what we know as induction and deduction. Those critics who are anti-critical put the question thus: since the experience of literature is a rich and dynamic and complex thing, and since logical principles force us to impoverish and make static and simplify that experience, it therefore follows that logical principles can only stand between us and that experience. What we must do, the argument runs, is to surrender to the work in all its fullness without any preconceptions or assumptions or theories or methods, and interpret it, accordingly, in its own terms. It is therefore difficult, if not useless or downright impossible, to deal in any general way with literary principles, for each work demands its own theory. That is why systems and theories are doomed from the start. This approach, which insists upon the uniqueness of the literary work and its accompanying effect, calls itself, in an honorific sense, "inductive," because it assumes that uniqueness of experience is inherently opposed to generality of interpretation, which it equates pejoratively with "deductive."

Let me admit at once that to adopt a critical method immediately and necessarily limits what you can find in or say about a poem: systems *do* put blinders on one—in a sense. But you cannot say anything about a work without doing so from some standpoint, without selecting some aspect of the total experience before you as

the subject-matter of your discussion, without implicitly or explicitly raising some question about that subject-matter to which your interpretation will be the answer, and without using knowingly or unknowingly certain assumptions and procedures for reaching that answer. Even an impressionist critic, who tries simply to recreate the responses he feels as he experiences the work, must take these responses as the focus of his endeavor, and must assume willy-nilly that there are elements in the work itself which are capable of affecting him, that certain kinds of responses are more artistic than others, that certain kinds of works are more valuable than others in so far as they can produce such responses, and so on.

I will try to explain this a bit more clearly by showing the various senses in which the words "inductive" and "deductive" may be used. *Deductive* frequently refers, in general usage and for the anti-critical critics whose argument I have been summarizing, to making up your mind before consulting the facts or disputing about something apart from its connection with truth. *Inductive* commonly refers to the opposite, in the sense of not having any theory but just collecting facts and letting them speak for themselves. Deduction somehow gets equated with systematic reasoning, while induction seems not to be considered as a form of reasoning at all. Now, strictly speaking, this is not the logical meaning of these two terms, and it is their logical meaning, I think, which will help me explain my position.

I am contending here that most questions of literary interpretation require reasoning, and that induction is just as much a form of reasoning as deduction. Of course, the answers to certain sorts of questions are self-evident, while in other cases they have to be inferred: if you want to know whether it is raining outside, all you have to do is go outside or look out the window to find your answer; but if you want to know whether it may rain tomorrow, or whether it has rained yesterday, then you need to make inferences. Most questions of literary interpretation—more than is often realized—are of this second type. What the words are in a poem, for example, is a question whose answer is self-evident, except in cases where the state of the text itself is in doubt; but what a given word signifies in that poem is often a question whose answer calls for making inferences, and it is that process of making inferences which is, whether in deduc-

tion or induction, inextricably dependent upon the principles of reasoning.

Logically, then, deduction refers to the manner in which the mind infers the nature of that which is unknown, and which cannot be known directly, on the basis of that which is known. If, for example, we read a poem in which the speaker is trying to persuade someone—who is presumed to be listening—to stop acting cold and unresponsive, and if we notice that this speaker offers as an argument the assertions that the listener's beauty is fast fading and that love fades with beauty, we would feel perfectly justified in concluding that the speaker is a man and that his auditor is a woman. And we are probably quite correct. The only point I want to make is that such a conclusion is in reality an inference we have made in accordance with rational principles. If no direct reference is made in the poem to the respective sexes of the persons involved, then we can never know for sure which is which. The facts do not speak for themselves; or if they do, it is with a voice we have provided for them out of our own knowledge and experience, our assumptions as to the usual behavior of men and women in our society: that it is usually the man who is the aggressor in love; that it is usually, by the same token, the woman who holds back; and that it is usually the woman whose beauty is in question.

Induction, on the other hand, can never tell us whether the speaker of our poem is a man or a woman, but it can help us to establish the probable truth of our assumptions about the usual behavior of men and women under certain conditions, and it can help us to test the adequacy of our conclusion that the speaker is a man and his auditor a woman against the facts given in the poem. And this it does by means of systems of its own—the rules of evidence, the criteria for making valid generalizations, the canons of causal inquiry, the principles for testing hypotheses, and the like—which, when applied to the facts, assumptions, and conclusions in question, depend just as much upon making inferences for their results as does deduction. Induction, then, far from offering an alternative to reason, provides us instead with a rational method for testing its results.

There is no other way of thinking apart from making inferences, and both deduction as well as induction are forms of inference.

Logic merely formulates what happens whenever we think effectively, just as grammar merely formulates what happens whenever we speak or write effectively, and induction refers simply to the degree of our concern with the facts when we make logical inferences. Thus, not only is deduction more pervasive than we thought, but induction is also more dependent upon making inferences than we suspected.

III

What, then, are the different aspects of the literary experience which may be taken as the subject-matters of one kind of critical inquiry or another, what are the questions we may raise about them, and what are the assumptions we may use in inferring the answers? If we pick out the four focal elements in the total literary situation, we will emerge with four key terms: the poet, his poem, the reader, and the world of experience which both poet and reader share. If we want to ask how a poem reflects the life and background of its author, the age in which he lived, and the conventions in which he worked, then it is the man or the age which is the center of the inquiry and the poem which has the status of a document. In following such an inquiry, we must proceed according to one set or another of rules and assumptions about the nature of documentary evidence which will allow us to infer from a written work the circumstances and conditions which surrounded its composition. This is the framework within which the standard literary histories are written. Or, if we want to reverse this procedure and ask how the life and background of its author affected the composition of the poem, then it is the poem which is the center of the inquiry, and we must select one set or another of principles drawn from the canons of ordinary biographical and historical evidence, or from the various psychological theories which by now have gained currency, which will allow us to infer from the conditions surrounding the composition of a work the meaning of its internal characteristics. Kenneth Burke has been developing for years a fascinating approach to this problem. Or, if we want to combine these two approaches and ask by what creative process the poet managed to bring the work into being, then it is the making of the poem which is the focus of the inquiry, and we must select from among the available theories of creativity and

the imagination some principles which will allow us to infer the nature of that process from the characteristics of the results—using, perhaps, if they are available, the poet's worksheets and variant versions of the poem. In this connection, the library at the University of Buffalo has been collecting for some time the manuscripts of contemporary poets.

Or again, if we wish to concentrate upon the poem itself, we may be concerned simply with interpreting the meanings and implications of its language, in which case we must use assumptions drawn from our knowledge of grammar and syntax, human thought, and the actions and motives of men. This widely practiced procedure has come to be called "explication." Or, if we want to study the poem as an artistic product, then we must ask how the parts are related to the whole and must draw upon one theory or another as to the nature of such relationships which will allow us to infer from the poem its artistic causes. The two chief theories available today may be described as the Platonic and the Aristotelian, the former being espoused by those New Critics everybody has heard so much about, and the latter being propounded by a group known as the Chicago Critics. The Platonic critics, such as Ransom, Tate, Blackmur, and so on, proceed by way of defining the nature of Poetry and deducing the consequences of this definition in terms of particular poems: thus, if poetry is, as they say, organized around a reconciliation of opposing views and emotions and attitudes, then we look in poems for conflicts, paradoxes, ironies, ambiguities, symbols, and the like, in an attempt to define the total meaning which arises out of the resolution of these tensions. The Aristotelians, on the other hand, such as Elder Olson, R. S. Crane, Richard McKeon, and so on, proceed in terms of a particular poem in an attempt to infer the various artistic causes which must have been brought into play before such a work could have resulted: thus, if a poem is, as they say, a unified whole, a solution to a specific artistic problem, then we look for that which seems to be holding it together and attempt to define the function of its parts in terms of that hypothesis.

Or, if we want to inquire into the relation between the poem and the reader, and ask how it affects him or what good or harm it will do to him, then we must select certain principles provided by the various available theories of education, of government, of morality,

of religion and science in relation to literature, and so on, which will allow us to make judgments in such matters. The case of the Library of Congress award to Ezra Pound some years ago, and that of the Nobel Prize awarded to Boris Pasternak in Russia just recently, offer interesting examples of this sort of critical problem.

If we wish to ask about the relationship of the poem to the world of experience, then we must turn to the various theories of ontology or of existence in an effort to establish the mode of being of poetry—whether it has any significant connection with reality or whether it is simply a fictive device for the amusement or edification of its readers. Much of Wallace Stevens' poetry itself is concerned with this problem. Or, if we want to ask about the poem as it reveals its author's views of the world and experience, his vision, and the qualities of his sensibility, then we must look to the various views of reality which are available, and to the various ways of testing one view or another in terms of its relevance and profundity. Matthew Arnold and T. S. Eliot are our most eminent practitioners of this mode.

I have not by any means exhausted the possibilities of any one of these approaches, nor have I attempted to give a complete list of those other approaches which even this one scheme and its combinations may afford. What I have tried to do is give some small idea of what a theory of criticism entails. And it is this: that any given interpretation is necessarily limited by its very formulation of a problem calling for interpretation; that there are different kinds of critical problems; that no one approach gives us the whole truth; that each approach does what it was designed to do and not what any other approach can do; and that each evolves out of a reasonable process of inference.

There is no escape, then, from reason—even if we should want one. Nor will we succeed in being "inductive" merely by hiding our premises from our conscious minds or from the attention of our readers and students. The poem does not interpret itself for us, and we cannot interpret it or anything about it without—deliberately or intuitively—bringing something of our past experience with life and with literature to bear upon our reading. Only the new-born infant comes into the world without preconceptions, and even he is limited in what he can know of reality by his inherited biological structure.

His physical and cultural environment begins immediately to go to work on that structure to condition it further. Not only is there no such thing as raw experience, then; there is also a tremendous difference between experiencing something in a certain way and understanding the causes of that experience—and that is where critical method comes in.

IV

If we must willy-nilly create theories as we go along, then one thing we can do is to understand what they are, what they are capable of, and what they are not capable of. Then we will become theorists, and this will liberate us, if not from deduction, then from confusion, for critical theory will teach us what the possibilities are, what to ask, and what not to ask of each of them.

The argument which holds that the experience of the work is the be-all and end-all of literary study, and that this experience is not to be interfered with, leaves unanswered, it seems to me, the problem which arises when a well-intentioned reader *fails* to feel that desired immediate and unreflective pleasure when confronted by some work which is by common consent great and powerful. How does such an argument allow for us to develop and extend our natural responses and tastes? How does it allow for the whole educative process? "If you can't feel it, then I can't explain it to you" is an attitude which, however sincere it may be when expressed by certain jazz musicians, undercuts the entire teaching profession at its roots. Who can say whether we learn by experience or by method? Obviously, learning needs both: without direct contact with that which is to be learned, we never feel we really know it, and that is the trouble, for example, with reading literary histories and interpretations without knowing the works they discuss; but without some awareness of the fundamental structures of the subject to be learned, we will never really know much else except a felt particular here and an isolated experience there. More often than not, a child who takes private piano lessons learns music from his fingertips up, but in my particular case the knowledge didn't get past my elbows. How grateful I would be now if I had been taught to understand the music I was playing! Surely, the best pianist combines practical skill

with theoretical knowledge; surely, the most moving performance is the product of a feel for the music in combination with an awareness of the over-all pattern of the piece. Far from being harmfully limited by analytical considerations, we are in a very real sense given a foothold when our intuitive responses fail us. What does limit us, however, is our ignorance.

We may never know anything in its real and actual fullness, but there is no reason to suppose, by that token, that we may never know anything. Categories, classifications, principles do tell us something. A map doesn't pretend to replace the terrain which it represents, but merely to help us know what to look for so that we may the more successfully find our way; no one, not even a cartographer, will claim that the reading of maps is a substitute for travelling—but no one can travel by himself anywhere without one, even if he has to make it up in his head as he goes along. The principles of reasoning apply, not to dissecting a poem, but rather to what happens in our minds as we interpret it. Happy discoveries are made most spontaneously by the trained and experienced investigator.

I am saying also, then, that even when we become relatively experienced in the field and have apparently less need for methodical inquiry to give us a foothold, it is better to know the grounds of our opinions than not. It is too true, alas, that even the most sophisticated readers of literature often talk at cross-purposes. It is possible for two critics to disagree without ever realizing that they are asking different questions or are using different principles by means of which to reach their conclusions, or that they agree on these things but not on the nature of the facts of the case. Either way, as with any dispute, no fruitful results will be forthcoming unless each party consents to locate the point at issue and define its terms. They may never agree, but at least they'll know where they disagree and why.

Finally, if we acquire the habit of seeking the grounds of our opinions, we inevitably will be led to testing them against the evidence and the alternative possibilities—to be, in a word, logically inductive. In this way, we will get as close to the reality we are seeking as we will ever get, for even the most stunning flash of intuition may be wrong and lead us astray. How else can we tell the difference, without some rules of evidence to guide us? With regard to any given critical question, there are better answers and worse answers,

better methods and worse methods. Any given approach is good in so far as it provides the terms and distinction needed to answer the question at hand, and does so better than the other available approaches devoted to the same question. Although there is no way of choosing between competing interpretations unless the issue is first joined, this doesn't mean, once two critics have decided on what they're talking about and what question they're asking, that one interpretation is as good as the other.

The answers to critical questions in literature are hypothetical: language, the "evidence" for all hypotheses, is inherently ambiguous, and the goal of analysis is an appreciation of the felt particulars of the poem rather than the formation of scientific laws. It is difficult to "control" the words in a poem experimentally, nor is it easy to plug a meter into the text. Quantification, although it has been tried with more or less success in answering certain kinds of questions, appears to be permanently limited as an approach to literature. But, within the framework of a given question, one answer will be better than another in so far as it explains more about what is actually in the text, and does so with a maximum of coherence and economy. In this way, ideally speaking, may critics choose among competing approaches, and in this way may knowledge about literature be progressively acquired.

Literary theory, then, is a form of reasoning which inquires into the kinds of questions we may ask about poems, stories, plays, and novels, and the principles and procedures which we may use in answering them; and it inquires further into the powers and limitations of each approach so derived, with a view to helping us appreciate what is and what is not appropriate in relation to any given line of investigation. Make no mistake about this: it need not tell us what to look for and how we must proceed, nor need it dictate the answers; what it can do is sketch out the possibilities. There are systems and there are systems—some are closed in that they limit our experience of a poem by setting up patterns of answers, and some are open in that they widen our experience by suggesting ways of asking questions.

And perhaps this is where realist and nominalist can meet after all, for both aim in the end to do justice to the experience in all its richness: even a rational theory, in my conception, must allow any

given work to flower before us in terms of its own being and not in terms of any preconceived formula. But the realist does not assume that a unique work requires a unique theory for its interpretation; he holds, instead, that its uniqueness is a product of a peculiar combination of recognizable variables rather than of the presence of wholly new and unknown elements. No two things are ever wholly alike or wholly unlike: a lot of music has been written on the basis of the piano's eighty-eight keys, and a lot more will continue to be written; many poems have been written out of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, and many more will continue to be written. We can never know in advance what an author may make of his materials, but there has to be something recognizable about his work or we would never be able to experience it. If the realist can admit that the experience itself is the ultimate court of appeal, then it seems to me that the nominalist has to realize that, unless we can connect something we don't know with something we do know, we'll never be able to know anything.

V

We are all critics, then, whether we know it or not. We form opinions and make judgments about books, plays, movies, comedians, clothing, fashions, world events, morality, religion, science, life, people, institutions, the opposite sex, foods, music, houses, cars, paintings, Supreme Court decisions—and we do these things constantly. It is hard, sometimes, to discover the grounds of our opinions and judgments; it is even embarrassing to be asked to explain them, for if we never reveal our assumptions, we can never be caught in the wrong. But if we care more for the truth than our feelings, we will be more anxious to find our assumptions than to hide them, and we will welcome the chance to test them in public. To be rational is to be vulnerable, but it is this very vulnerability which, paradoxically, strengthens us in our quest for understanding. Of course the mind is fallible, but it is its very fallibility which demands that we seek the means to correct ourselves, to stir our lazy memories, to jog our comfortable complacencies, to resist the overwhelming charm of our personal prejudices. Logic, when properly understood, is the only self-corrective technique which the mind has. We cannot fully ex-

perience what we don't understand, and pretending to do so can only harm us in the long run. When we reach an interpretation of a poem and entertain an opinion of its merits, therefore, we would do well to inquire into the intellectual grounds of that interpretation and that opinion. In such wise may we discover ourselves—what we really are and what we really think.

And this inquiry should lead us naturally to another, which seeks not merely to name our premises and to correct them if they prove inadequate, but also to discover in the poem the grounds of that interpretation and that opinion—whether what we thought we saw in the poem is really there, or whether there are other possibilities which we have hitherto been content to miss. As we explore the possibilities of our knowledge and experience in confronting a poem, therefore, we would do well to inquire into the powers of that poem to suggest those possibilities. Thus will we be led from the prison of our own prejudices into a liberal and enlarged area of aesthetic awareness, an area bounded only by our capacity for new experience—for we will be looking not simply for what we want but rather for what poets can do. And so we will move from the discovery of ourselves to a discovery of the poem, finding the poem by losing ourselves, if need be, as the unpredictable impinges upon the expected. In this way only can we do justice to ourselves; but, more importantly, in this way only can we do justice to the poet. How else can we get outside ourselves and enter the world he took such pains to make for us? For entry into that world is the aim and end of all our endeavors.

In Defense of Philosophical History

By FRANK E. MANUEL

■ In 1765 there appeared under an Amsterdam imprint a work by the Abbé Bazin entitled *Philosophie de l'histoire*. It was probably one of the first usages of this particular combination of words as the subject of a book, though as far back as 1572 Jean Bodin had already employed the adjective "*philosoph-historicus*" in describing Philo Judaeus. Implicit philosophies of history are, of course, much older. But reflections in rabbinic literature and the Church Fathers, the mystical schema in Joachim of Flora, and the realistic insights of Ibn Khaldun are to be distinguished from the explicit, self-conscious philosophies of history of the last two centuries.

Bazin's work was a most inauspicious beginning for the presentation of a form of knowledge that has consistently irritated and sometimes outraged empirical historians who conceive their primary mission to be the indefatigable pursuit of the all-too-numerous facts. The Bazin book was really a pamphlet of about 200 pages and dealt mostly with Biblical history, raising such disturbing questions as whether Moses was not really Bacchus in disguise. It did not at all justify its pretentious title nor its grand dedication to the Empress of Russia. Moreover, to compound its many blasphemies and inaccuracies, it was not written by the Abbé Bazin at all, but by none other than Monsieur de Voltaire. The title took hold, and, for better or for worse, philosophies of history have been with us ever since.

At about the same period a slew of works began to appear in Germany calling themselves *Philosophie der Geschichte*. By this

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FRANK E. MANUEL, Professor of Modern History at Brandeis University, wrote the report on "The Two Spains" in our Spring, 1956, issue. His most recent book is *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods* (Harvard, 1959).

time Turgot had delivered his epoch-making harangues before the Sorbonne on the "History of the Progress of the Human Spirit," and Vico's *Scienza Nuova* had seen its definitive edition in 1744. World chronology, which had still been the central problem of universal history in the seventeenth century, gave way to philosophical history in the eighteenth. Then, for about a solid century, roughly from the middle of the eighteenth through well past the middle of the nineteenth, there was a vast outpouring of grand systems. While philosophical history was a general intellectual problem everywhere in Europe, the most original writing was concentrated heavily in France and Germany. The Italian Vico had no important successor in his native land. And in England, except for the rather imitative works of Price and Priestley in the eighteenth century and Spencer and Buckle in the nineteenth, the subject was not seriously cultivated. In France and Germany two separate catenas were established, and there are parallel developments in both countries in which influences from one thinker to another can be described with meticulous detail. In the French School the main current ran from Turgot through Condorcet, Saint-Simon, and the Saint-Simonians, culminating in the mammoth structure of Auguste Comte. In Germany the line is traceable from Herder, Lessing, and Kant through Fichte and Schelling, again culminating in a *summa*, Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* in the academic year 1822-1823. Karl Marx who followed is probably more in the German than in the French tradition, though he synthesized elements from both sides of the Rhine.

For about half a century after Marx, the literature did not decrease in quantity, but it was manifestly the work of *epigoni*. Not until the decade of the first World War did the subject experience a major revival at the hands of Oswald Spengler. Finally, in the last great enterprise in this field, many of the pretensions of Germanic philosophical history have been decently hidden under a modest title in the traditional manner of English understatement: Toynbee's *A Study of History*.

Since World War II there has been a proliferation of briefer works, particularly from the pens of theologians. Slavophile and rather mystical Russians had already resurrected Christian world history in a Greek Orthodox form in the late nineteenth century.

Contemporary Catholic philosophers like Maritain and D'Arcy and Protestant theologians from Bultmann through Tillich and Niebuhr have added their sectarian versions of the pivotal role of sin in universal history.

Now it is not difficult to define the two major and most obvious uses to which the philosophies of history have been put in the course of the last two centuries. They have served either as a civil theology, an apologetic of God's way in the world, a theodicy, a religious drama, or they have accompanied a program of political and social action. These two uses were, to be sure, never mutually exclusive, since the civil theology often involved precepts of moral human behavior in this world, and when men read secular philosophies of history they sometimes experienced emotions akin to that oceanic feeling which Romain Rolland once described to his friend Sigmund Freud as the essence of his own religious sentiment. Thomas Churchill, the late eighteenth-century English translator of the works of both Condorcet and Herder, has himself naively depicted the romantic religious emotion awakened in him by working with philosophies of history. "It has made my breast glow with the fervor of virtuous sentiment," he wrote in 1795. "I have almost felt myself the inhabitant of another world." Freud, of course, would identify this vague sense of communion with the infinite which philosophical history generated in its devotees as nothing more than an infantile wish to return to the womb. Vico's civil theology is probably the most magnificent statement of a profound religious purpose in philosophical history. It is a demonstration of a Providential order accompanied by a moral admonition to mankind. The persistence of this religious idea—as distinguished from the rather shallow emotivity of a Thomas Churchill—is clearly visible even in Toynbee's work. Like Old Testament prophets, Vico and Toynbee exhort mankind to choose the path of divine reason and to live. If you follow the way of hyper-sophistication, you will again fall into the dregs of Romulus, threatened Giambattista Vico. If you build military empires and deny the moral truths of benign Deism, you will be utterly destroyed, warns Toynbee.

The second use of the philosophy of history, its relation to a specific program of social and political action, an idea first set forth by Condorcet, Saint-Simon, and Comte but not really exploited until

Marx, requires no extensive documentation, since in our day a large portion of the world has officially adopted the Marxian philosophy of history, though in a form somewhat amended by Chairman Khrushchev. For the history-intoxicated revolutionary before he came to power, philosophical history had served as a heady stimulant, an assurance to the elect of ultimate triumph, a guide to action, an organizing intellectual force which created single-mindedness, a marvelously effective, self-fulfilling prophecy. The dictum pronounced by Condorcet in one of his manuscripts, *Maîtriser l'avenir*, "to master the future," was perhaps the earliest realization by a philosopher that he was forging an instrument of great potency while writing a sketch of past world history. That among these secular reformers and revolutionaries the philosophy of history became an *ersatz* religion which adapted and often plainly translated religious terminology has been noted frequently before. The martyr of a revolutionary cause was sustained in his darkest moments by the consolations of history. The contemplation of the eternal chain of human destinies was for him "an asylum where the image of his persecutors cannot pursue him," wrote Condorcet while in hiding from Robespierre's agents. "It is there that he is truly in an Elysium."

In recent years, the renascence of the philosophy of history has provoked a series of virulent assaults against the whole subject among both historians and philosophers. The general grounds for attack are virtually self-evident. The philosophy of history, having become a tool, a mere engine of class or international warfare in the hands of princes and peoples seeking advantage, cannot be taken seriously as a form of knowledge. It is ill-disguised propaganda and should be excluded from the university if it cannot be banished from the city. Similarly, if the philosophy of history is a sacred work, an instrument conducive to spiritual renovation for men with or without God, it should be cultivated in schools of divinity and in religious establishments and has no place in the academy. Of course, a third type of criticism, reflecting our contemporary preoccupation with methodology, doubts whether a philosophy of history is possible at all. This could be answered with a Johnsonian gesture by stubbing the toe on the ten volumes of Toynbee, the two quartos of Spengler, the four of Auguste Comte, and sundry less substantial works.

The problem can be posed on a quite different level, however.

Admitted that philosophies of history have become handmaidens of theology and politics, the vital question still remains: of what use have they been and can they still be to the professional historian or to every man in quest of historical knowledge?

At the outset, it is necessary to deal with what might be considered the parochial interests of professionals defending their status. One type of criticism which can be disposed of rather quickly, and with an *ad hominem* argument, is the self-righteous attack of Mr. Dry-as-Dust. He may be honest enough in his fashion when he is writing his doctoral dissertation well-nourished with facts, but place a textbook publisher's contract in his hands and open up before his dazzled eyes a prospective market of four million copies for a one-volume history of civilization, and his purity melts as he latches on to the first philosophical generality that comes to hand. What Toynbee calls the antinomian Western historian is transformed into a true believer, a believer in anything modish. It is good to remember the subtle mockery, the wry humor, with which Carl Becker dealt with the worshippers of the cold, hard facts. When you next open your favorite textbook, scan it for its philosophico-historical generalizations, count up how many mutilated borrowings there are from Herder and Condorcet, Marx and Toynbee, when the author is not parading a crude bit of manifest destiny, *grandeur de la France*, chosen people, tight little island, or democratic values. Indeed, it might be maintained that everybody wears a philosophy of history; some are draped in rich Renaissance brocades; some cover their nakedness with hand-me-downs, second-hand Marxisms, third-hand Toynbees, almost unrecognizable tatters of Turgot and Spengler. We read the philosophers of history, plagiarize them, and then damn them in public. You cannot escape the philosophy of history by assuming the tough visage of the famous television dick who constantly demands: "The facts, the facts, nothing but the facts."

I shall dwell no longer on professional Tartuffism—and I write as one not entirely without sin.

Other attacks must be taken more seriously. Philosophies of history are accused of being systems of high abstraction—or reduction—and as such, it is charged, they make the historical world lie. Back in 1883, Dilthey delivered a telling blow when he ridiculed the presumption that the philosophical historians had found truth

by distilling some universal essence from the infinite variety of past human experience. In their arrogance, they imagined that history would reveal to them its ultimate word. History has no such secrets. History has no unitary message to convey. Moreover, the true historian, philosophical or otherwise, Dilthey insisted, cannot be a mere abstractor of what others have accumulated. He must have immediate and direct contact with historical reality in some form, dig for the original ore, get dirt under his fingernails. He cannot be a generalizer alone. I should like to associate myself with these strictures, though I wish to forewarn the reader that I intend to abandon the maligners of philosophical history in mid-stream.

In their attempt to imitate Christianity or monistic scientific systems, the philosophers of history have often ended up with a few gnomic phrases—world history as an alternativity of the organic and the critical, a war of sin and goodness, a struggle of life and death, a succession of expansions and contractions, a triad of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, a battle between sameness and novelty. All this is too far from my direct historical experience. I shall not defend the philosophers of history for their obsessive systematization, wrong footnotes and citations, a prioristic tendencies, mystical utterances. I join their enemies in attacking their pomposity, sibylline speech, and dogmatism.

But the majority of the classics, Vico and Herder, Hegel and Marx, Comte, Spengler, and Toynbee, remain among the great educators of the historical race. And, paradoxically enough, it is their empirical observations rather than their structure-building which I have found intellectually most rewarding. Their luxuriant flow of analogies contains metal far more precious than the ultimate object of their quest. They were unsuccessful in finding a succinct alchemical formula to describe all historical being, but in the process they made wonderful new combinations of historical elements. They are like the explorers who sought for gold, often enough discovered only fool's gold, but in passing opened up new continents of far more durable riches. In a recent work Ludwig von Mises, a rigid scientific thinker, dogmatically asserts, "A philosophy of history has to be accepted as a whole or rejected as a whole." If that is either a moral imperative or a scientific law, I shall proceed to violate it.

In certain respects, the relationship between the philosopher of

history and the workmanlike professional historian is akin to that uneasy meeting between the religious mystic and the institution-bound theologian. Such men are often enthusiasts whose vision of the historical world comes to them in a moment of sudden illumination. Having descended from the mountain, they have even recorded for us the external circumstances surrounding their revelation. That rather pedestrian, mid-eighteenth-century Basel official, Isaak Iselin, has described the fervent enthusiasm which forced him to write his *Geschichte der Menschheit*. Nicolas Boulanger was gazing at sea shells in the roadbeds he was digging for King Louis XV, when there came to him a vision of world history as the consequence of a trauma inflicted on mankind by the deluge. Auguste Comte noted on his manuscript the precise minute when the dynamics of the historical world were unfolded to him. In our day, Toynbee has left the most detailed autobiographical testimony of all: fittingly, the original burst of light occurred on the Orient Express, but there were also minor raptures like the one he describes near the duck pond in Kensington. Professional historians necessarily look askance at such mystical or poetic experiences: we are housebroken and they are not. But good empiricists that we are, shall we not have to concede that the visions of the mystics, respectably draped, have often in the end been accepted by church councils, holy synods, legislative assemblies, party congresses, even historical associations?

The fact that these philosophers of history have often been motivated by a desire to alter the social, political, or intellectual structure of their times and have composed patently partisan pamphlets should not blind us to their discoveries. We are, after all, above such reduction of a man's total work to what *he* may conceive to be its underlying purpose. Voltaire wrote anti-clerical brochures disguised as philosophical history, but he also broadened the scope of history immensely by including the new dimension of manners and morals and customs. And, may I confess it, a paragraph in Voltaire drawing upon the conformities between the naked Hebrew prophet walking through the streets of Jerusalem and the Indian holy man impresses me with its simple significance even today. I prefer it to the frock-coated, gentlemanly presentation of the prophet which is still widely prevalent. Karl Marx plotted to change the economic structure of the world and the character of its fundamental human

relationships, and in doing so he has left us new insights into the nature of work and human personality, into the historic role of the struggle for subsistence, and into the dynamics of the conflict of classes. In one sense Toynbee may have written a ten-volume sermon in which Anglicanism and Deism are fighting for supremacy, but he has also illuminated, by the mere act of juxtaposing similar circumstances in different civilizations, a great number of real historical situations. His description of common elements in frontier societies, his analysis of the Levantine personality through the ages, his depiction of the syndromes of disintegration, themselves based on empirical studies, can in turn fertilize others.

The eminent Dutch historian, Peter Geyl, in his now famous onslaught on Toynbee, begins by giving the devil his due. Toynbee "is sensitive to the colorful world of phenomena—to life." But Geyl cannot rest with this affirmation. He gives vent to what seems to me to be a thinly-disguised Puritan negation of the sheer richness of Toynbee's historical imagery. When he feels himself ensnared and enchanted for a moment, he draws back into his professional austerity, into what, in the Terry Lectures at Yale, he refers to as his "calling." "Splendid as are the qualities of the work, fascinating as I have found it," writes Geyl, "grateful as I shall ever remain to the author for profound remarks, striking parallels, wide prospects, and other concomitant beauties—the system seems to me useless." Handsome, yes, but not handsome enough to tempt me, said the hero of *Pride and Prejudice*. But it is precisely these characteristics, not only of Toynbee, but of the other great philosophies of history of the past two centuries, which bestow upon them a unique worth and lasting value. To stimulate thought and to activate the historical imagination is the highest praise. These men are to be read, not as antiquarian curiosities of literature, but because in the vigor and freshness of their analogies they have expressed empirical truths. Philosophers of history are the great vivifiers of actual history-writing. They have enlarged our understanding of man and of human behavior. They speak with tongues. They venture grand schema, they focus a strong light upon one aspect of human nature—often to the exclusion of others—the importance of man's everyday economic activities, or the all-pervasiveness of a unifying historical temper, or the growth and exhaustion of style, or the resistance of man's psychic

nature to change, or the identifying elements of class and nation and epoch.

Let us take Vico as an example. A good deal of his writing was decadent humanism even in his own day. What etymological nonsense, silly Roman history, what sheer fantasy about the giants who peopled the globe, about the interpretation of specific myths, about the Merovingians. And yet, approximately a century after the first edition of Vico's major work, the young French historian Michelet discovered in him the inspiration for a romantic view of history which saw in all aspects of human existence at a given moment in time keys, traces, indices, revelations of the spirit of an age. Vico taught Michelet to use the lowliest event and the greatest as symptom. Vico gave him a sense of the wholeness of an epoch's character—the harmony of its feeling, thinking, and willing—and inspired him to create romantic masterpieces. There come to mind a few pages on the wild libertinism and scientific creativity of the Directorate—pages alive with true emotional greatness. And we can still derive nourishment from reading Vico. He shows the ideal in the sensate, never allowing us to forget the particular, never enshrouding us in pure vapor. Of all the philosophers of history, Vico perhaps now has most to teach as we seek to explore the history of the Western mind and sensibility in recent centuries.

One may argue that the tenets of romantic history are available elsewhere and that one does not care for this lush foliage anyway. But try Herder's definitions of the *Volk* spirit. Generations of Germans and later Slavophile historians lived under the spell of the idea of the folk-genius, that of hard core of character and cultural personality which seems to identify a modern nation. You do not have to swallow Herder's *Schwärmerei* to be moved by his depiction of the contest of genesis and climate. Even those of us least prone to see the nation as the key unit of historical development cannot fail to sense the vitality of this conception. Herder defined the problem, asked the question. He had the idea of an ineradicable or nearly unalterable stamp of cultural personality—a conception, incidentally, which has been more fruitfully exploited by anthropologists than by professional historians. We in this generation may be less attuned to the rationalist progressists of the Condorcet-Turgot type, but they did sustain a whole nineteenth century of Whig historians, in good books

and in bad. Admittedly, the philosophers of history are time-bound. It is no longer Marx's history of a struggle for subsistence that can now fascinate young American students—it is "alienation." But that possible reality, that questioning of the quality of the relationship between a man as subject and the object into which he pours himself, is a profound one, and it must henceforth be asked of all ages where it may be remotely relevant.

The philosophers of history have posed the valid issues. They have forced us to wrestle with the morphological analogy. When dealing with a real historical situation, we must ask ourselves about decadence or new birth. But when Geyl challenges Toynbee to answer in so many words—yes or no—are we or not in an age of historical decadence or growth, the question so phrased may be pushed aside with an historical fifth amendment without losing one's membership in the profession. It is a legitimate inquiry—the one Spengler answered with such absolute assurance—as to whether different collectives—he calls them cultures—have significantly variant reactions to time and space. The centrality of the problem has thrust itself upon empirical historians. There is nothing metaphysical about it.

Few of the great philosophers of history were closeted visionaries. Among them were activists who themselves experienced in various forms what they described. Saint-Simon, the déclassé noble, knew in the flesh the conflict between classes and social systems. Toynbee, the classical scholar and Near Eastern political expert before and after Versailles, watched the death throes of historic Islam and the birth and proliferation of military nationalism about which he later wrote. It is because of their particular insights and world experience raised to a high level of generality that I find the philosophers of history worthy of profound meditation. That is the word I mean. They should be our Platonic *Dialogues*, our *Discourse on Method*, our *Treatise of Human Nature*. They should be the education of the young historian. Instead he is often brought up on a bibliography of bibliographies of bibliography.

Empirical observation, broadened and generalized by a philosopher of history, in turn enriches further empirical observation. My contention is that the philosophers of history, themselves moved by direct contact with reality, have provoked and inspired the profes-

sional historian—the historian who rightfully insists upon retaining *his* direct and immediate relationships with experience. The philosophers of history should be defended as renovators of historical perception, as men who have broadened our grasp of the world, even as Cézanne has introduced novelty into our perception of a landscape, and Freud has deepened our understanding of the human psyche. Philosophies of history are rich in one-sided earthy apprehensions of experience. Herder's description in the *Ideen* of the tragic outcome both for conquerors and conquered of the fast amalgamations of what once were individuated societies; in Vico, the loneliness and barbarism of the intellect in the society of the human stage become over-refined; Comte's daring equation of societal evolutionary stages with his own regression into what he calls fetishistic perception during his madness; the tension between sociability and a desire for anarchic freedom depicted with stark simplicity in Kant's brief essay on philosophical history; the Saint-Simonian analysis of a crisis generation in the public exposition of the doctrines of the cult—all these are examples of the brilliant new ideas which the philosophers of history have poured abundantly into the cultural treasure-house of Western society. May I adopt a phrase of Saint-Simon about the diffusion of such new ideas? "They are like musk. You do not have to touch it in order to feel its influence."

When Comte's philosophy of history is reduced to the law of three states, Hegel to the play of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, the Saint-Simonians to the alternativity of critical and organic epochs, Vico to the three types of nature in the *ricorsi*, Condorcet to all-inclusive rectilinear progress, Marx to a dogmatic economic interpretation, Toynbee to the five stages of the civilization cycle, Spengler to mechanical chronological equations of the duration of "cultures" and "civilizations" in various stages—and such *is* the treatment they receive at the hands of their detractors—then we are indeed boiling these men down to their dead skeletal remains. And it is not in praise of such rattling bones that I would write.

One of the more common and widely-known recent attacks of this nature on philosophers of history has been the riotous tarring of the victims with the black pitch of the idea of inevitability. The emotional overtones of freedom are so powerful that few things arouse our antagonism more readily than the notion that we are

bound, that possibilities are not infinite. However grim the reality, we balk at being deprived of the last vestige of our childhood dream of liberty. I should like to vindicate the philosophers of history as a body from the accusation that they ever meant to squeeze mankind into the straitjacket of inevitability. It can be maintained that even when they subscribed to the idea, it was at most a loose and partial swaddling which left important members free; that the inevitabilities they dwelt upon were varied; and that a discussion of abstract inevitability is less useful than an examination of the concrete propositions which each evolved. This apology for the true and authentic nature of philosophies of history should be accompanied by animadversions both against the simplistic *epigoni* whose sins they have unjustly borne and against Sir Isaiah Berlin's *Historical Inevitability*.

Virtually no major philosopher of history (with the possible exception of Spengler) has claimed that everything in historical development is inevitable. On the contrary, in large measure their work has revolved around the problem of demarcating the realm of the inevitable and defining the possibilities of free human action. In the process, they have molded new concepts on the relations of culture and personality, freedom and necessity. Their structuring of the realm of the inevitable was merely a way of defining some aspect of human nature, and the sum of their definitions, contradictory as they may be, has served to extend our total understanding of human nature and of the historical process. It is doubtful whether Sir Isaiah can demonstrate from the texts that any but the most vulgar popularizers believe in absolute inevitability—and as soon as he accepts the identification of scientific norms and apparently repetitive phenomena in the historical process, he is arguing merely about degrees of determinism. All things are inevitable, but some are more inevitable than others, might be the responsive chorus of most philosophical historians if they could answer his slashing attack in, of all places, an Auguste Comte Memorial Lecture. In the establishment of a hierarchy of the inevitabilities, reasonable men will differ; they will no doubt reveal diverse types of inevitability as they are swayed by religious, political, or psychological considerations. They will, above all, reveal themselves and their generation. And in this historical confession they will make more complex and more varied our knowledge of man.

In summary, I submit that the philosophers of history have increased our appreciation of concrete, real experience. In this respect I have received illumination from the religious philosopher of history, from the historical sociologist, from the Marxist. My attitude may be called eclectic, but I would prefer to relate it to an idea of plenitude. You can, of course, adopt toward philosophical history all of the traditional attitudes that have been adopted toward God. You may believe in the one true system, you may deny the existence of any. You may be agnostic, militantly sceptic, or even acataleptic. But *all* philosophies of history are revelations of true history, and as such I would exclude none of them. I embrace all philosophies of history outside the asylum—and I do not really draw the line there. The institution, after all, harbored Auguste Comte.

Many professional historians would prefer to forget these historical enthusiasts, in the same way that certain schools of philosophy today exult in their break with the philosophers of the past. Some are afraid that the philosophers of history might seduce us into bad habits. Granted. They are as dangerous to the development of the historian as poets and novelists, and they are as vital to his existence.

Toad

By PAUL KENDALL

I never left home:
There were portents and omens.
The evening before, the garden hose
Coiled in the figure of Homo
Sapiens. In the breezeway a toad
Crouched on the bricks: lewd,
Alien, and liverish. I tore
My trousers on a hinge in the stone
While getting the spade.

I did for the toad in a single blow.
But the brass and copper pots
On the terrace turned dull.

That evening my wife held
Eleven clubs.
But in their matching maple cribs
The twins began yelling, and in getting up
She face-upped the cards
In a ragged circle on the table.
'What bad luck, what a shame,' I offered.

But blond Mr. Holyoak, my department head,
Smiling, would hear no talk of luck,
After he saw my ace of spades:
'Not chance but choice.
Not chance but choice.'

PAUL KENDALL, Professor of English at Ohio University, is well known as an historical biographer. He is the author of *Richard the Third* (1955), *Warwick the Kingmaker* (1957), and is now working on a biography of Louis XI of France. "Writing poetry," he says, "is my way of trying to keep myself alive in the twentieth century, since so many of my waking hours are spent in the fifteenth."

That night a full moon
Howled into our bedroom.
My wife woke with a cry—
'I had a dream,' she kept saying,
'About that awful Mr. Holyoak.
He never stopped grinning
And he had buttercup eyes.'

This morning, though it was sunny,
After listening to my wife's advice
And hearing in the garden a faint groan,
I decided not to go to the office.
So I never left home.

Even though Mr. Holyoak telephoned.
I explained, my wife was ill at ease.
He laughed and said he'd arrange a panel
On personnel problems with questions to follow
In the gold room at the Orion.
But my wife was right at my elbow,
And I said I was not feeling well.
'Watch out for jaundice,' said Mr. Holyoak.
'Last night you were looking rather sallow.'

Late in the afternoon
The TV image shrank to a lemon.
I tried to phone the service man.
But our house had lost the dial tone.
And not that only.

I tried the kitchen radio:
The light came on
But glowed dull.
Suddenly, no matter where I turned,
A hollow pumpkin voice intoned—
'Earth can you hear me?
Eleven clubs and the ace of toads
In the copper shallows.'

I looked out the kitchen door:
Another toad watches,
Wartless and bright yellow,
Within the dazzle of the marigolds.

West of Eden

By PAUL KENDALL

It was really much the same when the greasy-haired Goth
Drew close about a city those painted wagons.
The citizens could not believe even a god of wrath
Would advance to this world his promised agonies.

In broken German they offered gold and many a gem.
Cowhorned and yawning, the Gothic chieftain crossed
His legs and ate fresh butter from his thumb.
And spoke impeccable Latin. And they were lost.

He stormed into the city on the morrow,
Found the citizens packed in churches and at shrines,
And much regretted this display of Christian sorrow
For massed blood-letting always clogged the drains.

In the market-place on a throne of stinking furs
He smeared his horny eyelids with honey and soot,
And spoke of justice, war and foreigners,
Occasionally using the ablative absolute.

They pile spoils horse-high before his eyes.
His orator announces that once again
Free people have vindicated their ancestral ways.
The chieftain eats a peach and palms his chin
And thinks, in Gothic, that it looks like rain.
He is Arian and Aryan,
And lives in hope of killing without pain.

The Screen

By ZOFIA ROMANOWICZ

■ I am writing to you because we could never talk. I don't know which are worse, those isolated words, unfinished phrases casually thrown in, which create only an illusion of understanding, or, when we have not enough courage to speak, those long halls of silence, those endless empty spaces which, for me, are very difficult to cross. When exhausted, we lie side by side, we even avoid looking each other in the eyes. Out of habit, I place my hand on your shoulder, simply because I find it more comfortable this way. With you I am more alone than without you. More alone when you are there than when I only think of you.

I am sure this is my fault. I have allowed so many insulating layers to form between us.

In these matters, of the two of us you are more honest. For you, everything is in order, settled long ago and confirmed by tradition, since you cannot bear any complications. You are content in your own way, perhaps even happy.

ZOFIA ROMANOWICZ was born in Radom, Poland. Arrested by the Nazis in 1940, she spent nearly five years in prisons and concentration camps, among them the infamous Ravensbruck. Since the end of the war she has lived in Paris where she studied and graduated in the field of philology of Romance languages at the Sorbonne. She is the author of numerous short stories published by literary magazines in France and of a book, *Baśka and Barbara*, which has had three printings already and which is to appear shortly in Italian translation. Soon to appear also is an anthology of her translations of the lyric Provencal poetry. Presently, Zofia Romanowicz is working on a long short story, parts of which have already appeared in Paris. She says this will be the last of her works filled with the bitter memories of war and concentration camps; from now on, she will write only of love. *The Screen* was translated by J. Solecki.

But my silence—it is keeping things back.

A moment ago the lift was once more on its way up. I thought it was you. I stopped typing, rested my fingers on the keyboard, suppressing their clatter and my breath. In these old houses the acoustics are fantastically sensitive, a word or a cough on the ground floor resounds, multiplied as though in a gallery. But by now I have grown to ignore other noises, I don't hear them any more. When, however, the lift tears itself away from somewhere deep down below and creeps upward, groaning, then I hear it, sometimes even in the middle of the night. The lift door slammed on the ground floor is a signal at which, quite without conscious thought, I become alert and still. Independent of me, that which is within me, detached, inside me, which could serve as proof of the soul's existence, so very independent and insubordinate it can be, that something begins to count—one, two, three—how many times will it click, that mysterious lift catch which snatches at every floor. The lift does not come up as far as my attic. One must get out on the sixth floor, walk along the corridor and then mount the last part of the way by kitchen stairs twisted in a spiral.

When the gate is slammed after the sixth click, and when after that someone comes up the steps, in spite of all reasons to the contrary, that something inside me always thinks it must be you.

In the old days I used to rush out into the passage with a jug, as though to get some water. At the sight of each other we invariably used to exclaim with surprise, I more loudly than you. Already then, right from the start, I felt the need to hide from you how weak I am.

A moment ago someone came up to the sixth floor, got out of the lift, mounted the stairs, and walked along the corridor outside. It was done in such an unusual way, cautiously, on tip toe, that I could not recognize the footsteps. Did I imagine it, or did the steps hesitate for a moment by my door? The draft, which always blows through from the window to the door, through the cracks, even when there is no wind outside, disturbed the paper flag which I had stuck above the bookshelf. Do you remember? We were given it at some Liberation anniversary.

The flag rustled, danced as if alive, my heart was beating fast, while that someone outside did not knock, did not pass my door, and no other doors banged in the passage. Perhaps I imagined it?

Had you come here, why should you have hesitated before the door? That is more like me, not you. Sitting over the machine, quieting its rattle, I thought: it is he. I shall pretend that I am not at home. I won't open the door. But when the seconds went by and no one knocked, no one whom I could have sent away, from whom I could have separated myself, everything changed. I can admit to you now, for it is not important any more, anyway, that I could not remain in such uncertainty for more than a minute. I rushed to the door—you will have guessed—with a water jug.

Outside there was no one.

That is not all. I'll admit with equal haste something else, which would have amused you. I rushed next to the window. This is a small window, with a sort of ledge jutting out above it. To get to it one must either move the table, at which I normally work, or climb upon it. I climbed on the table. Yes, I am sure the sight would have amused anyone. The roneod notes of the last conferences with the professor, scattered on the floor, were flying everywhere. Some of the pages slid right under the bed and I had to crouch on all fours to get them out.

Standing on the table and leaning out of my window in a dangerous fashion, from a certain angle it is possible to see, directly below, the corner of the street. You never knew that I had always watched there, whenever you left me. It is a very small fragment of the street that I can see, just enough for you to make two steps, no more; but those two steps, without you knowing it, brought you back to me, gave you to me. From high above, ridiculously foreshortened from this bird's eye view, into my vision came your head, the tips of your shoes, one, two steps. I greeted you on the first and bade farewell on the second. Once it happened that just at that moment you ran your fingers through your hair. This gesture, so well known to me, touched me. It seemed to constitute some prearranged signal. From then on I always hoped that you might run your fingers through your hair when you passed.

And that was all. Always the same. The street below became empty. I got down from the table, shut the window, collected the papers, and finis.

You never raised your head, never looked in my direction. In any case, my window, hidden behind balconies and the window

ledges of the lower floors, is probably scarcely visible from the street. Nor have I ever told you, till today, that in this way I used to look out for you as well.

The street is like a magnet. You have no idea how it attracts me. Desperately I grip the parapet and try to resist, for it suggests to me a descending plane, a line, along which, it seems to me, I could slide down to you with the same skill as the pigeons that live near by in the rolls of ornate plastering. They spread their wings and throw themselves down. It is childishly simple. Behind me papers rustle, sheets flutter, the flag dances as if it were stuck not behind a book-shelf but on a stern of a ship, which, high up on the crest of the wave, shivers from side to side considering the angle along which she will have to plunge down with all her weight.

That is all. Firmly I hold to the parapet. I am safe. . . .

No, I am powerless. Just as before, when my window was behind bars. For all this has happened before. All the waiting and looking out, with a cold bar pressing against my cheek and hands numb from holding on to the bars. Far away, at an angle, right at the end of the line of vision, could be seen a piece of the pavement leading to the guard house by the gate, and the corner of the gate. Through it passed people in green or grey uniforms, or civilian clothes, or with the round skull caps worn by the prisoners. They carried parcels to their sections, or bundles of steamed clothing, or papers, keys, books with fates entered in them. So much happened in that stretch amounting to no more than two steps—between the corner of the prison block and the sentry box, camouflaged against the wall. But I preferred to look further, beyond the wall. Over the wall was a view stretching to the horizon, rimmed with woods, moulded into a hill and a valley, a large river spilling between the meadows, the color of which told the seasons.

Don't be angry at this comparison. Through this wood, beyond the river, outside the prison wall, there was a road. I remember the pattern into which it arranged itself, running down the hill. A man once walked along this road and looked towards our prison. Huge, with many wings, it lay before him, exposed. He walked slowly, stopping from time to time, looked at the prison, depressed. Against all reason I felt that he looked at me, that he saw me.

I can't describe to you what waves of love and loneliness poured

from me toward this man who stopped for my sake on the edge of the wood, on the bend of the road. He stopped for me and looked once more in my direction. My face was a small spot against the dark background of my cell, anonymous, without eyes or mouth, perhaps he could not see me at all. There were so many windows with bars looking at him, arranged in three rows. Yet at that time I was sure that he saw me, that he chose me, and that out of all the windows he selected the one from which the faint spot that was my face, and still smaller spots, which were my hands, moved, sent him signs, fled to him, called him.

What could he have done for me? And yet I waited for him, suspended on the bars, for weeks, right to the end. Perhaps it was forbidden to walk along the road from which one could see the prison? He never appeared again. But you see, I know so well that feeling of numbness in the back, the stiffness of gripping fingers, the dizziness and futile waiting for help from someone who is outside the gate, who is free.

My waiting for you is the same.

Thus, a moment ago, with papers once again scattered all over the room, I dashed to the window to check whether they were yours, those steps, which dissolved by my door.

I was blinded by the light.

I don't know what it means, this spring weather in the middle of winter. It is possible from the window to see the entire city, all the way to the hills that enclose it. It is bathed in blue as if it were at least May. There isn't a cloud in the sky, though, as usual, mist gathered at the horizon over the hills, the rooftops standing out against the edge of the shade with midday sharpness. The dome of the museum, not far from here, which always hastens the sunset for me, is once again overgrown on one side with scaffolding. How long can they go on mending it? It looks so powerful, and yet there is always something wrong with it. I shouldn't be at all surprised if one day it wrinkled up and caved in like a huge, wilted puffball.

Further along there is the green coupola of the university, standing at the edge of a ravine, along the bottom of which, I know, you walk, and there is your street. And still farther on, right on the edge of the sky, higher than the hills, on a bed of mist, in apotheosis, white and unreal, float the onion-shaped white cupolas of the basilica.

Seen the way I see it, this is, after all, a very beautiful city.

I gripped the window frame more strongly and leaned as far out as the invisible bars would let me. To the right, at an angle, beyond the frame of the next, fortunately lower, building, I saw the bend, part of the wall, and the grey poster on it. By straining my eyes I could almost read what the poster said. I looked till my fingers were numbed and tears came to my eyes.

It could not have been you. There is no other way, you must go through there. In any case, I repeated to myself, had you come, why should you turn back at the door?

I collected the papers and sat down again at the typewriter, remembering that we had agreed that I should telephone, or write. I had not written, nor telephoned. How then could it have been you? Now I laugh at my lack of reality, which, where you are concerned, grows to frightening proportions. This is why, once and for all, we must tell each other everything. That is, I must tell you. For it does not seem to me that you could have anything unsettled or untold, where I am concerned. I don't count those few times of miserable "unfaithfulness" which you partly hid and partly boasted of, as if each time you wanted to fathom how far you could go at the next opportunity. O! your departures and returns! Is it possible to go away and then return?

It is not possible to return. Believe me, I know.

It is warm, and yet here in the window a moment ago I was shaking. Is it possible that I am feverish and that the flu, which I used as an excuse to get off from work, is really on me? I don't know much about illnesses of a smaller variety, I never could be just a little ill; if I am, then I am very ill, not the way others are. Flus and colds pass through me without fever and differ very little from the sufferings of the spirit. I have a headache, black thoughts beset me, and I feel unwell.

In any case, the professor was not in the least surprised when I expressed a wish to remain at home for a couple of days. The flu is supposed really to be raging in the city. It is the fault of the weather, too beautiful, the treachery of winter which could not be spring no matter what guise it takes. It is like an old woman just leaving a beauty parlor, ogling and smiling, unaware of the fact that in this way she is completely ruining the effect of her makeup. Nothing harmonizes; black, naked trees, haphazardly spiked with

last year's shoots, do not join with anything. Walking in the park, I wondered at the greenness of the lawn, thick as velvet, but also a deception from last year. For a moment I sat by the pool to watch children playing. The sails of the tiny boats billowed out, the fountain in the center scattered drops of spring rain, the children were happy, the ships cut through the water, crossed, collided, full of life, like a busy harbor. I unbuttoned my coat and turned my face to the sun. I thought that I was getting sunburned, and it felt good. But then the wind blew, as if freshly drawn from snow, and I probably caught a chill. It was as though, behind a person sitting in a sunny room, doors leading to a cellar were opened, letting in a draft of mortal coldness.

Such is this spring. And I am only sorry for the buds, which here and there are suddenly swelling. It is, after all, obvious that it is not time yet.

But in my room it isn't at all like May, it's more like June. The small dormer window, inserted into the roof like a lens, magnifies the good weather, catches all the rays reflected from the screen of the opposite wall. This is called reverberation. My room is like a hothouse. And yet my teeth chatter. I shake and wonder whether I should light the fire. My flag rustles and tries to get away from the shelf, like the last leaf on a branch.

I don't feel like making a fire. I only do it with a certain amount of enthusiasm when I know that you are coming. So you see, I wasn't expecting you today at all. I don't even want you to come. The best proof is that I did not open my door at once when the steps stopped in the passage outside. I ceased typing, pretended I was not at home. I must be suffering from a slight temperature and this is why I am going to pieces now. Besides, there is something wrong with the leg. That scar is inflamed, it shows through the stocking, I can't force myself to forget it. Is it possible that it will reopen?

There is something about this leg of mine that is like the wheat of my landlady, from whom I rent the room. Once, some time ago, before I knew you, she noticed a very strange grub on the carpet. It wasn't a bed bug. It looked rather innocent. But if one looked at it with horror, the way she did, with every moment it looked more and more like a bed bug, black, flat, horrible.

Oh, what horror, what a dignified disgust! The landlady looked

at my blankets on the bed, at their still suspicious German stamps, then at me, and asked in a very polite tone of voice:

—Are you sure this is not a . . . parasite?

—My dear lady, in our camp we only had lice—I replied with shattering dignity.

I replied, but naturally later on, when she was not there any more. The answers which come to my mind afterwards are as a rule dignified and devastating.

In actual fact, I blushed and stuttered so badly that my landlady must have been confirmed in her worst suspicions. In the end it turned out to my advantage, for up to now she has not asked for the return of the blanket, which originally she lent me.

In the meantime, the mysterious parasites, which I had not noticed at all before, brazenly, with nothing to lose, embarked on a veritable invasion. Immobile, they sat everywhere, on the walls, on the ceiling. Astually, they showed no hostile intentions. Nevertheless, I felt like the legendary king in a tower, condemned to be eaten alive. I searched every corner and crack, spent a fortune buying powders.

In the end it turned out that they had hatched out in some war-time wheat.

In a cache under the window there was a bag. Who would have thought that it contained wheat! During the war the landlady probably kept her stores for a rainy day in my room. It never was rainy enough for her to have made it into coffee, or to grind it in a hand mill for flour, as was done. After so many years, the war-time grain, forgotten in its hiding place, instead of germinating had hatched out grubs.

It would have been a triumph to have brought the landlady up, to have shown it to her. I gave up the idea; it would have cost me too much. You know her. Clenching my teeth, I gathered it all, teaming and alive, into a piece of paper. It made quite a large parcel. It is the same with me. There are days, weeks, months, when I don't remember. Yet all the time the bag with my grain lies in the darkest hiding place, where no one can tell what is germinating in it, what is hatching out, what monstrosities will come out and beset me.

I waited for evening before I came down with my burden, sneaking past the porter's door like a criminal, afraid and ashamed.

I did not want anyone to see it, did not want just to throw it into the litter bin; I could not have managed any explanations, could not have borne any comments.

The streets were empty, yet I felt as though everyone were looking at me from behind the drawn curtains, from the black, unlit flats, from behind the corners! How difficult it is to get rid of an unwanted burden! Turning and twisting, bathed in perspiration, finally I dropped the bundle in a small alley, which was quite empty, by the gate of what looked like a convent community, and ran away as exhausted as if it had been the body of a person I had murdered, and as if the entire police force were after me. You would have laughed at my unnecessary complications. I don't laugh, even today, and never go that way, though I realise that the bag is not there any more and that no finger will point out: That's her, it's hers.

I understand those who say: Let us forget. I want to do so myself. I have no passion for retrospective thinking, and if I could, I would rather have tried to remember Sarah, the beautiful Jewish girl with whom, at the very beginning, I shared a cell. She did not worry in the least about what would happen. She sang the latest hit tunes and fixed her hair in curlers for the night. That was right at the beginning. No one had any idea what was being prepared for us. But even then Sarah's gaiety annoyed some of the women.

—Quiet!—they used to say—You'd better think of what you have done.

—What have I done?—asked Sarah.—I must sit here and think all the time: I have come out of the Ghetto. I have trampled down some snow. . . . For indeed, briefly, her crime could have been described in this way.

My ambition is to be like her. As long as possible to sing songs and fix up curlers. Later on, one would find out what one had done and the price one would have to pay. When my leg does not hurt, when I work and walk, then I don't remember. I don't try deliberately to remember, for the sake of some stupid principle, to remember that I was in prison, in a camp, that I was subjected to an operation. Only sometimes I find it unpleasant to put on a thin stocking through which the scar shows, especially when we go out together. But when the scar becomes livid, and irritates, when the wound reopens, then I find it difficult not to remember that, after all, I was

once subjected to an experimental operation, and that the experiment continues inside me, going through its alternating phases.

Writing has its advantages; it helps me to control myself, prevents me from scratching, from tearing to the bone this livid, slippery serpent, which runs from the ankle to the knee, cuts through the muscles of my leg, eats into it, saturated with poison, penetrating deeper with every year. Already I limp. You pretend not to notice, but I do limp on that foot; sometimes it slips from under me, goes numb, as though devoured from inside and hollow. Today it seems like a fiery serpent, burning me, and yet I can't tear it away from me.

Were I a believer, as once I was, I would have been able to perceive a mystical reason for this periodical manifestation through me of evil, of that evil which reigned over the world.

Remind me, assure me, that as long as I can, I am being like Sarah. This flag—do you remember how someone pushed it into my hand when we danced in the square with the others? I had such a pretty frock on, and I wore stockings, in spite of the heat, and nothing could be seen through the stocking. But even had it been visible, I don't think it would have spoiled my joy. The band played under the open sky, music came from everywhere, one could have sworn that there was music everywhere in the world, that everywhere, in all squares and streets, entranced people were dancing, happy people, who have survived, have found each other, who have met and are in love. You are taller than I and I had to lift my face to you, so that at the same time I could see the sky; how, beyond you, it swayed to the music, and the flag, which I held in my hand, fluttered in the breeze and touched our faces, once yours, then mine, as if it too wanted to bring us together. You were alarmed and stopped, when you saw me cry.

—What is it?

—It's only a dream—I answered.

—This is not a dream, this is reality—you replied.

And I understood you. You wanted to say that this, now, was not a dream but reality, that we were together, dancing, feeling tenderness for each other, and that with every word, glance, touch, love was beginning. But you did not understand me. I said: It's only a dream, full of relief, for I felt as if I had come out of a dream into broad daylight, out of the coldest grave, from the darkest death

into sunshine, and bathed in tears I was convincing myself: that it was not reality, it was a dream.

Perhaps I should have told you then? Set things right? But how much easier it was to succumb without a word to that current of life, of desire, through which, it seemed to me, the other reality was becoming a dream for ever.

It was not so only on the first day. Generally I am gay, not dull; judge for yourself. I tell funny stories and laugh willingly, even at myself. But there comes time when the leg begins to irritate, when I haven't yet thought out pretexts to send you away for the time when I have to go into the hospital. These are the worst moments. I live then through shame and anxiety, twist about, lay false trails, run away, in the same way as the time I did not know what to do with the sack of war-time grain. You don't know that even since "there was you" I have been to the hospital about three times. I managed to conceal it from you. What triumph, and how sad that it was so easy! Each absence you took for some sentimental escapade, for a form of teasing you, and every time when I came back I found in your eyes a sign of new interest. You did not ask about anything —because you did not want me to ask you about anything.

You must admit, you did not think I had so much to conceal from you?

I shall always return to you—you said once with what was for you sincere feeling and conviction. I am sure you wonder at your constancy, your attachment to me, so many years, so many returns. Heavens! There, when I leave you, I can never say whether I shall come back to you.

The professor will be happy. He will come here and say: Do you want anything, my child?

He will immediately pull back the blanket and expose my leg. Perhaps that serpent, which has attached itself, will at last give up to him its secret? Do you want anything, my child?—and his fingers will run along the scar, which had split. He will feel the swollen, poisoned muscle with a professional curiosity. His eyes will shine from behind the glasses, and to me it will seem that I am lying in the camp hospital, and that Doctor Schidlausky, a white coat casually thrown over the SS uniform, has come to have a look at his guinea pig.

I know that I am not fair to the professor. He has shown me a

great deal of kindness. He offered me work, the easiest possible cure. Through his contacts he found this room for me, and keeps an eye on me. To put it briefly, he would not let me perish. I can't, however, resist the evil thought that he would not let me perish simply because he needs me. He knows that sooner or later my wound will reopen and that he will be able to take me to his hospital. Then I will repay with interest all his kindness. He will make notes, observe, collect information. One day, when I am dead—that is, if he is lucky enough to survive me, for recently the poor old man has gone down quite a lot—he will at last be able to complete his work and publish in print just what poison was injected into me and how my inner life defended itself. In this way the experiment of Doctor Schidlausky will not be wasted.

In fact, in a certain way, I even like my hospital retreats. I am not the only one in the long hall where forty-odd women cry and have hallucinations, get better or die. They would not have allowed themselves to die out of sheer spite, out of curiosity about what would happen to the others, but still the nurse appears in the door, at the bottom of the hall, carrying a screen in both hands. Then silence falls. She moves along the narrow passage between the beds, comes nearer, I can hear her steps, count them. She goes past some beds, stops, for the screen cuts into her arm, then walks on. At the sight of her, eyes light up, then fade. In the place to which she is going somebody's hands pull up the sheet with a weary movement.

The bed, once screened, remained closed off, excluded from the rest of the ward, excluded from the world.

If I had enough courage I would ask for my bed always to be closed off with a screen.

Now I think that the lift, the steps which died away, was probably not you but the professor. To begin with, he believed about my flu, then suddenly he felt hopeful—perhaps? He took his brief case, put his black hat on his grey hair, over the high, noble forehead of the scientist, and went out to have a look, to observe. In the last moment he thought that perhaps it would be better first to get some inside information from the landlady.

He knows how I feel, though I have never said anything to him or made any difficulties. When he threw back the blanket, pressed the swelling with his fingers, I looked at him like every ill

person, with eyes full of trust and hope. The same eyes raised from the other forty-odd beds over which he bends in turn.

—Do you want anything, my child?—he would ask with a smile, kindly, like a grandfather. I clenched my hands on the sheet, and in those moments he probably felt something. He could feel that I wanted to defend myself, to kick, bite, to push away the assistants with one quick thrust, those stupid, adolescent students who wrinkled their brows in a flattering manner, when in a subdued voice, using Latin expressions, he explained to them my "case." I felt like jumping out of the window.

But no, I lay there and let them.

I tried to defend myself there, and what good was it? Once I ran out of the camp hospital through the window. On another occasion I ran away from the block and the entire camp stood at a penal parade while they hunted for me. When they caught me, I felt better when I noticed that they were taking me not to the camp hospital but to the bunker where people were taken to die. Then I walked obediently. I would not have tried to defend myself if the black "bomb" had appeared, if they had taken me to the sandy hills by the wall and told me to turn around. The sandy hills by the wall, were, in my fantasy of seventeen years, the arena of Christian virgins. My only worry was whether I would have enough time to shout sufficiently loudly, sufficiently distinctly—Long Live Poland! Truthfully. And I would have shouted, just as those others did, luckier than I. Heavens, Long Live Poland, just think . . . the inscription is probably still there, scratched out on the wall, on the damp wall of the bunker, the initials and the date. But it was not supposed to have been the right date.

The corridors of the camp bunker used to repeat and elongate echoes. Keys rattled, far, near. Doors banged, boots clumped on stone. I waited right next to the door, irritated that my heart was choking me, that the ground was caving in under me; I was ready to go among the lions.

But that was not what they wanted from me.

So I fought, tried to defend myself, I tell you, as a woman can fight, with teeth and nails. The sandy hills by the wall, the cry and the firing squad, all came to nothing when they put a chloroform mask on me. But I remained conscious for a long time, in order to

realize, to savor the submission: it was my body, covered with bruises, the stiff body of a captured beast, spread on the table.

I don't know why I am writing to you about this today. I could have told you of this and other things a long time ago, right at the beginning, then we could have seen what might happen. For example, the day in summer when we sat by the river, and when the evening found us enamoured, heavy. Lamps were lit on the bridge. In the black water their lights began to writhe like serpents, and then we could see the water was flowing. You put your arm around me, I snuggled my head into the warm cavity of your neck. The tree under which our bench stood rustled its branches and covered the sounds of the city. This twilight was made for confidences, you probably had a desire to hear some terrible fairy tale, which would have made you shiver, a fairy tale, which is only half believed. You wanted to stroke my head and tell me—My poor, little thing, you have lived through so much. . . . There, there, now . . . don't cry, it is gone, past, now . . . now. . . .

How could I then speak of such things? It would have been as if I had uncovered for you, poured out at your feet, that bag of grain from under the window. . . .

I was simply afraid to frighten you. I was afraid of what you might say.

You are so untouched—where did you grow up, so happily? For you these are only fairy tales; stories which make one shiver but can be forgotten immediately afterwards. None of these things could have happened to you. You move about in the world with a wonderful feeling of self-assurance, the ground never caved in under your feet, you never bent down for a piece of bread which had fallen to the floor. Such superstitions are for those who have known starvation. How do you mostly imagine it was like in there? Once, to my absolute delight, you voiced your manly anxiety whether this young maiden suffered abuse or the application of physical force. Those were good days when the victors raped the women of the vanquished; one might even say, idyllic.

When we were told to undress, when I understood it, I had on me all my worldly possessions, collected over the months of prison life. There were rumors that all parcels were to be taken away, but what one had on would be left. What can be worse than to undress

with shaking hands, to undo buttons and buckles, to emerge from a protective shell of overcoats, dressing gowns, dresses, sweaters, petticoats, so many protective layers, seemingly unending, which pile up into a pitiful heap on the floor. *Los! Los!*—shouted angry German voices. I felt relieved when finally I dropped the last garment and stood there stark naked.

—And that?

From my finger they took the wedding ring. It was not mine; I promised someone who had gone to die that I would pass it on if I survived. For a long time it would not come off my finger.

I remember the bridge of black planks arranged on the concrete floor, over which, hurried on, I ran, bare feet flapping. In the communal bath it was dark with steam, and thick with bodies. The women who had travelled in the same transport with me, old and young, beautiful and ugly, each different, each with her own unrepeatable characteristics, the same, who on seeing that the train was slowing down looked feverishly in their bags for the last bit of lipstick, now stood, compressed into a thick mass, under showers, out of which splashed alternately boiling hot or icy water. This was a swarm of inflated and hanging breasts, stomachs hard or wrinkled from child bearing, buttocks still blue from the last interrogation, hands shyly covering bits of hair, trying to keep their balance, warding off the blows. All this shivered, leaped, or squatted, whimpering, crying, groaning, calling upon God, in vain. On to me stuck bodies that were wet and sickeningly warm. I was dissolved, multiplied in this anonymous mass.

They sat in the next room. We had to approach one after the other, make a half turn, show teeth, throat. Well, what do you expect? Among them there was one who played the role of a doctor.

The bridge of black planks was slippery. Turned to stone, I walked over it without shivering.—Nearer!—I understood that they were shouting at me— Nearer!—I lifted my eyes and saw white, shiny teeth in a sunburnt face, penetratingly blue eyes, laughing. Hands with slim fingers, covered with delicate golden hair. I don't remember how I turned when I was ordered, how I showed my teeth, my throat. I was sure that at any moment I would die, that it wasn't possible to live through such things.

I came to in another hall smelling of phenol, with a burning

bruise on my breast and a big toe crushed by an officer's boot. Into my arms was thrust a stripy dress, stiff as a hair shirt, and my number —ten thousand.

After that, how could I know the pleasure of timidity and later the sweet shamelessness of being naked? I should never have started at all, should have run away at the beginning, on the first day, mixed with the dancing crowd, so that you would have lost sight of me, while there was still time. Or I should have asked you for your help at once, should have told you. Then you would have known the meaning of my rebellions, my tantrums, and my fears. Perhaps you would have known how to be with me. Perhaps you could have. It was possible.

When naked, I am branded. I can't walk two steps without feeling under my feet the slippery black planks, and upon myself the disdainful eyes, blue as yours.

You can see how much separates us, when you think we are nearest. But I am the only one to suffer this remoteness.

Listen, don't think—for once there, too, I saw triumphant nakedness. Everybody looked with disapproval; I was close to tears. I could have never managed to walk as she did, through the alley-way made up of ten thousand onlookers, without stumbling once, without lowering her head. Her naked steps appeared not to touch the black cinders with which the camp alley was covered. She walked on tip-toe. Her breasts were round and firm, the swaying of hips did not spoil the gliding harmony of her movement. The women guards in black capes, with hoods pushed over their faces, holding the leashes of straining teams of dogs, seemed to make a symbolic escort for her. This was the morning parade, and on the roofs, on the wires, the white frost still shone. The sky was hardly turning light. Against the black of the cinders, the olive greenness of the blocks, and the grey mass of the live quadrangle in which we were arranged, her body concentrated in itself all the rosiness of the day about to be born. This was the dawn.

Across her back she had a board with a shameful inscription. She was one of the block supervisors caught in a Lesbian act.

As she was passing me, amidst the stamping boots and the rustling capes of her escort, it seemed to me that the measure would be unbearably filled, that at any moment someone would rush out

of the ranks and throw over her shoulders a prisoner's coat. But she passed our ranks and went on, unreal, shining from afar, all the way to the Kommendatura barrack, from where for a long time afterwards, while the parade continued and we were kept standing, came high pitched screams.

It's good that I am writing and not telling it to you. For if at this moment you made a grimace, said something. . . . You like to be frivolous. The scene through which I then lived had nothing in it of frivolity; it was only very, very sad. The pairs that used to slip out after the evening parade, in the passages between the blocks, wearing round their necks handkerchiefs tied in exquisite knots in the form of a man's collar, the scenes of jealousy, hysteria, and sometimes real, helpless love. On that morning she had nothing in common with what she really was, this block supervisor. I never saw her after that and don't know what happened to her. At that moment for me she was a warning. In a rough dress, in clogs, wasted away, with hair clipped to the skull, I looked upon her as an apparition which for a moment arises from the waves and is immediately chased by dogs.

I am stammering and evasive while telling you about these matters, the same way as other women probably stammer when they speak of their first loves. For this was the way I saw love, for the first time in my life.

Again for a while I silenced the keys with my fingers. The lift. . . . But it stopped at the fifth floor; my landlady lives there. Perhaps it is the professor. He will have a cup of tea with her, as usual, and then come up to find out about me.

—Do you want anything, my child?

Listen, I won't open no matter who knocks. No matter who knocks, I shall not open my doors today. If it is you, it would be enough for me to see you through the window. When you go by like this, without seeing me, there is the greatest degree of truth between us. For what is there, between us? And anyhow, I don't really miss you. You aren't even life.

Listen, the lift. . . . No, it isn't true. You are life. Such is life. Goes away . . . comes back. Stands outside the door, will not be called in, goes by. Rosy it glows through, and after that is hidden by blackness.

I am ashamed at the thought that you will read this, ashamed, like the last time when I exclaimed and then began to cry. You were bewildered.—Are you hurt? you asked.

It hurt me then and it hurts me now. The pain spreads, moves, and gets hold of me. It frightens and repulses me.

The lift is quiet. No one knocked and the street is empty, too. Since today I am pouring everything before you, I might as well admit that again I have been looking for you out of the window. The pigeons glide in flocks, and when they make sudden movements right here under my window, braking against the air and pushing themselves away from it with their wings, when they turn about, I can see their pink feet pressed in pairs against their bodies, just like the undercarriage of a plane, and I can see the delicate hollows under their wings.

How beautiful they are! Perhaps it is spring already and only I, retarded, shiver with internal cold, my teeth chattering. Perhaps the white cupolas of the basilica will any moment take off, shoot upwards, like a collection of child's balloons. A breeze blows in, and I take a deep breath. What does it taste of? It tastes of the river, the wood, and freshly softened earth, although below me are only roof tops and roof tops. I wish I could go. . . .

What weather, and how beautiful everything is! With both my hands I am grasping at my invisible bars and leaning over the valley of chimney stacks and roofs, cut into by canyons of streets, through which perhaps you are walking towards me at this very moment. Hurry—or don't ever come at all. The room behind me sways, the professor's notes are dancing on the floor, the paper flag over the bookcase flutters loudly, trying to tear itself away. My leg, pressed against the window frame, is turning numb, and I can feel the tingling tide which flows from it and spreads over my entire body, filling it with independent, repulsive life.

I get down from the window, strike the keys, and type, so as not to think of it, not to plough it with my nails. Only I don't know what to write about anymore. Come, help me!

But these words don't mean anything any more. There is no appeal any more. We have said goodbye already. That last time, it was really the last time.

Do you know now why it hurt?

■ DISCUSSION

A New Liberalism to Pay Old Debts

By JAMES H. JUSTUS

In a recent essay in the *Antioch Review* (Summer, 1959), William G. Carleton makes what must be the most engaging plea in the past several years for the renewed free exercise of the principles common to the liberal tradition. "American Intellectuals and American Democracy" is an impressive survey of all humanistic pursuits in our mid-century. Because of the tact with which Mr. Carleton defines the "dominant American tradition," only the most diehard opponent could quarrel seriously with him. This tradition is

> optimistic, democratic, rational, experimental, and pragmatic. It maintains that men are not the slaves of social conditions and blind historical forces, that to a large extent can rationally mold their own institutions, without an hereditary or a privileged elite to guide them, and within the value-framework of human dignity and individual freedom.

If this is liberalism, it is a sensible liberalism, and the truth is that as far as this definition goes, even some conservatives would assent to it. Even more important, Mr. Carleton is correct to insist that this political philosophy is more likely than any other to win the allegiance of uncommitted nations and those just on the threshold of industrialization.

But there are several assumptions in Mr. Carleton's plea for a more vigorous activity, within this dominant tradition, which are open to question. A complaint about the pallid or neurotic literary artist is, I think, one of these. And if my disagreement with Mr. Carleton is out of proportion to the quantity and tone of his generally sane criticisms, it is because his criticisms are, at times, of a piece with more strident or popularized outcries in the New York *Times Book Review, The Saturday Review, Time,* and other journals.

JAMES H. JUSTUS describes himself as "a conservative who prefers to read liberal periodicals. They're simply more interesting." He teaches in the English Department of the University of Washington and his major field of interest is the modern American novel.

Mr. Carleton's contrast of the artists of the 1920's and the 1930's with those of our own day has the merits of being both dramatic and thoughtful. During that earlier time, by using the findings of the economists and sociologists, the artists' rediscovery of Man in Society did, indeed, turn out to be vigorous, multi-faceted, and stimulating; it dramatized problems even if it did not effect solutions.

But this contrast is also surely the result of hindsight. Non-involvement or non-commitment among artists of the 1940's and 1950's was not so widespread as Mr. Carleton indicates; rather, the objects of commitment shifted. Alignment in the ranks of important political and social activity is now no longer automatic or, frankly, even probable. For any number of reasons (another war, the cold war, the nuclear threat) contemporary artists have rediscovered Man by Himself (as described earlier by Freud and Jung). This use of intellectual or scientific material has resulted in work no less vigorous, no less multi-faceted, and no less stimulating. In both periods, of course, there has been a plethora of the second-rate, the precious, the shoddy.

If, as Mr. Carleton says, too many contemporary artists have "retreated into the individual psyche, or fled into the non-rational and the irrational, or seriously distorted the American democratic tradition," it behooves us to look upon these tacks as (a) those artists' serious attempts to come to terms with themselves, their art, and their society (in that order) without the burdensome adherence to any externally imposed program; and further as (b) manifestations of dissatisfaction with the societally oriented schools and trends through which many of their elders worked without conspicuous success. Now they tend to think of the 1920's and 1930's (when they think of them at all) in terms of Faulkner, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, O'Neill, and perhaps Steinbeck, and not in terms of Sinclair Lewis, Upton Sinclair, James T. Farrell, and the once-impressive roster of earnest proletarian writers. They also remember even Edmund Wilson's casual admission (made in 1930 while defending Marxist Michael Gold's scurrilous attack on Thornton Wilder in the *New Republic*) that a social situation is implied in "every product of human thought, no matter how remote from society its propositions or images may be or how impersonal the technique that presents them." Not a very original observation, but this kind of reflection, especially in 1930, becomes symbolic of a later liberation of the artist from the constrictions of an economic, political—or whatever—manifesto.

The manner in which the contemporary artist comes to terms with himself, his art, and his society may be disturbing to ideologists of one kind or another: he may do it too quietly (James Gould Cozzens, Wright

Morris, Robert Penn Warren) or he may bruit it about in great lapses of taste (Jack Kerouac, Norman Mailer, Tennessee Williams); but mostly he does it, as is usual in any decade, capably between moments of gloomy depression and euphoric rapture. Some of us may regret that so many of the dedicated intellectuals of that earlier generation have lingered on to repudiate their enthusiasms and to embrace more reactionary beliefs. Without a doubt, Malcolm Cowley, Edmund Wilson, John Dos Passos, and a half-dozen others were more exciting back then, but at least their disenchantment did not completely paralyze their talents or their minds, as it did to some; they saw the inadequacies of earlier commitments and attempted to do something to counteract them. This in itself is not deserving of patronizing estimates. "Freedom," says Victor Ayoub, "is the willingness to accept the consequences of your acts." Those who *were* willing were acting out of the very tenets of the pragmatic, experimental, and democratic tradition. The consequences for many of them meant, publicly, intellectual downgrading and, privately, an all-too-sobering appraisal of more conservative positions which they had once considered beneath their contempt.

Mr. Carleton also laments the modern emphasis on form and methodology, the "high stylistic polish, the precociously sophisticated craftsmanship of our rising young novelists, even when they have little to say." One reply would be that even novels with little to say are more interesting when they are better written than when they aren't. But the crux is what art is supposed to say. Mr. Carleton wants to see "social considerations and problems . . . [,] the impact of society and environment on individual man himself . . . [and] awareness of the social environment as a molder of character and as a maker of traumatic situations themselves." This is explicit, and we should be grateful for Mr. Carleton to spell it out; previously only Henry Luce has more effectively defined what the young American novelist should be writing about.

Without presuming to answer for The Young Novelist, I would suggest that some years ago he tired of reading novels showing how environment molds character; his literary forebears committed themselves so exclusively to such a program that their results have made it happily unnecessary for later generations of writers to worry about it. After Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, David Graham Phillips, Jack London, James T. Farrell, and Theodore Dreiser, it is questionable how much further this notion can be used intelligently. And after Robert Herrick, Brand Whitlock, Albion W. Tourgee, Charles M. Sheldon, Harold Frederic, Gertrude Atherton, Grace Lumpkin, and James M. Cain, it is pretty clear that the notion is merely a gambit, used mostly to illustrate

the silliness to which a commitment so narrow and exclusive leads.

It may be that the contemporary novelist has finally conceived of environment as something at once more immediate and deeper—though perhaps not broader—than did those earlier novelists. There is, indeed, a "preoccupation with individual man's motivations, love life, sex drive, frustrations, complexes, and neuroses. . . ." When a novelist deals with the individual psyche he is committed to these things. To sacrifice concern for an individual man, now, in favor of Man, strikes him as futile. Moreover, it also represents an abdication of his responsibilities as a creative artist in this time when the artist must feel that the individual himself, not just the society, is faced with annihilation—not with mere dislocation, but with annihilation.

And to berate the rising young novelist for being "precociously sophisticated" in contrast with his counterpart in the 1920's and 1930's is to ignore a considerably important area of fiction during that time: those writers who championed a gnosticism of places and people, a style relieved of "commonness" by the rococo, the *recherché,* the exotic. James Branch Cabell, Gertrude Stein, John Erskine, Carl Van Vechten, Joseph Hergesheimer, Robert Nathan, and Elinor Wylie may not be typical in the same way as Dos Passos, Cain, Erskine Caldwell, Farrell, Fitzgerald, and Lewis; but their experiments in the writing of fiction are as important as reflections of the intellectual life of their day as the more permanent contributions. And, to push the point further, even the early Fitzgerald and the best of the journalistic Dos Passos indulge in a flirtation with novelty and exoticism for their own sakes.

Mr. Carleton concedes that, occasionally, there come "certain insight and fascination in the plight of the neurotic hero enmeshed in his own complexes and in the interplay of his little circle of family, friends, loves, and hates." The statement is not a bad one for describing much contemporary drama and fiction, and if we ignore the connotation of "enmeshed," "complexes," and "little circle," it adds up to more of an achievement than Mr. Carleton would grant. If in the past fifteen years we have come to accept Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County as something more than a rarefied dream world or the regional nightmare of a talented neurotic, then perhaps in time the "little circle of family, friends, loves, and hates" in the pages of younger artists may come to signify a larger circle where social, even political, commentary works itself out in fictional terms. Is this the "ultimate wisdom in art?" Unhesitatingly, no. But what art is? To expect "ultimate wisdom" of art is to make it groan with a burden it was never intended to bear. We feel lucky when the philosophers and scientists come up with insights into ultimate wisdom.

To charge the New Critics, the Southern Agrarian "Romantics," and the Neo-Thomists of "embracing" non-rationality is to be either unacquainted with their body of works or to hold to a peculiarly personal view of *reason*. There should be no shame in attempts to assert the "values of aristocratic society"—even for those who plump for thoroughly democratic values, since aristocratic values in America have never been in danger of being adopted. But it may be that the values of a democratic society can be perceptibly strengthened by being forced to respect such an enemy. Certainly we cannot take seriously the aristocratic "threats," even from the Formalist critics, when the most convincing proof offered for their existence is an isolated remark by Kenneth Burke or an Every Reader's Thumbnail Guide to the New Critics by Robert Gorham Davis.

What Mr. Carleton's charge of non-rationality finally amounts to, I think, is that these men for the most part accept the conservative view of man, and that Mr. Carleton, speaking for the "dominant" tradition, doesn't.

The conservative has always seen man compounded of the non-rational as well as the rational; and, unfortunately, it is the non-rational which seems to give him more trouble, both private and public. To come to terms with this darker, less definable element in man is not to "embrace" it but to try to understand it without denying it. This assumes, of course, that man is not a perfect animal and that in most respects he never will be; but that if given favorable circumstances and a social framework of tradition and authority, he may become a dependable creature capable of love, compassion, co-operation, and reasonable judgment. Man, as Clinton Rossiter observes, can govern himself, but there is no assurance that he will. History shows many examples of *limited* success in self-government, but this conditional capacity calls for education, religion, tradition, and institutions to underwrite it—this despite the fact that education, religion, tradition, and institutions are flawed and fallible.

Mr. Carleton sees "absolute commitment" as the only alternative to "non-commitment" in the younger intellectuals. This may be true of the Neo-Thomists and a scattered number of those Protestant intellectuals who have entered the Roman Church. But by and large the conservative artist looks askance at an "authoritarian" tradition while firmly asserting the value of "authority." The two are not synonomous. The American disciples of T. S. Eliot, for instance, balk at the suggestion that education of the young be turned over to the monasteries, but at the same time they appreciate the notions of discipline, wide- and deep-exposure to a firmer curriculum, and the moral and intellectual respect that might be earned by submitting the sloppy, chaotic mind to such a program.

Discipleship does not equal intellectual slavery. Mr. Carleton underestimates the ability of the conservative mind to exercise independence, while at the same time he overestimates the flexibility of the maverick liberal. Certainly, a New Conservatism that can cause *The Grapes of Wrath* to be dropped from a university reading course because it's "only a social tract" is deplorable; but so is a Liberalism, New or Old, that, after listening to the howls of a pressure group, removes *Huckleberry Finn* from the open shelves of a public library because it shows an antiquated social attitude toward the Negro. Recent literary history shows, as a matter of fact, as many alarming examples of liberals as conservatives proliferating from the ideological cookie cutter. Talents such as Dreiser, Dos Passos, Clifford Odets, Elmer Rice, and Sinclair Lewis may not have been damaged permanently by the substitution of conviction for imagination, but what of lesser talents—Zona Gale, Fannie Hurst, Michael Blankfort, Leane Zugsmith, or Heywood Broun? To be sure, the counter tradition of revolution is embarrassingly recorded in Dos Passos' *Adventures of a Young Man,* but the esthetic failure of the American Left is most embarrassing in the works of Harry Elmer Barnes, Matthew Josephson, and Waldo Frank and in such protest dramas as *Triple A Plowed Under, Turpentine,* and *Battle Hymn.*

In 1937 William Phillips and Philip Rahv described the literary tenor of that decade as "objectivity, realism, and an interest in the social manifestations of individual life." They found that the important writers of the time—James T. Farrell, Robert Cantwell, Henry Roth, Josephine Herbst, and Dos Passos—were those who had exposed themselves to the materialist spirit of Marxism and to its "dynamic reading of history," but had yet refrained from the dogmas of a proletarian aesthetic. (The most thumping failure, interestingly enough, they found to be Dos Passos' ambitious *U.S.A.*) The Phillips-Rahv program for the future was to release American "literary isolationists" from their "bondage to the pragmatic past"; and for the American artist to claim his "true inheritance," he would have to accept the "Europeanization of American literature."

This program, from two of the more sensitive and intelligent of the liberal critics, sounds touchingly nostalgic and a trifle disturbing, even when we remember the date, when we now face, in 1960, Mr. Carleton's charge that it is the New Conservatism that is attempting to "substitute European conservative values for the American liberal tradition." The spectacle of both conservatives and liberals battling over a proper America-First attitude is enough to suggest why the contemporary artist prefers to cast his talents in a moral rather than a political framework. Pacts

between Good and Evil may have a way of being compromised, but they are rarely abrogated.

Mr. Carleton likes the idea that America has captured five Nobel prizes for literature since the 1920's, for even though "we may deplore the current avoidance of social realism . . . [,] we can only applaud . . . increasing sophistication and craftsmanship." This seems rather to be missing the point. The Nobel judges are not particularly prone to deliver over their honors to writers who show mere "sophistication and craftsmanship," for if they did, they might have given the prize to Cabell or Van Vechten, Paul Bowles or Truman Capote. If Faulkner, Eliot, and Hemingway have been so honored—and we might even include Pearl Buck here—it has been as much for their serious concern about the nature of man as for their considerable techniques for communicating that concern.

"The New Conservatives see in historic conservatism a consistency, a unity, and a continuity it never had in fact." The conservative would answer this charge that the continuity is a "given," stemming from the recognition of the natural condition of man. Mr. Carleton implies that America suddenly sprang into being in 1780 or thereabout and that the Age of Reason is largely responsible for the American character. As the conservative sees it, the Puritans had the first whack at forming our national character, and, whether we like it or not, their view of man was firmly assimilated by the time Jefferson made his declaration about man. The liberal is not very fond of being supported by the Puritans in his race for the Dominant Tradition, but for the sake of the record he should be reminded that the founding of a state by that little band of Puritans, for all its bigotry and intolerance, represents the first radical act in our history.

The Puritans carried off their act of dissention, however, with a firm view of what they could and could not do. They still believed that life was unified, that all knowledge was one, that all branches were dependent on illumination by God. Perry Miller and T. H. Johnson have given what is still the best composite characterization of the New England Puritan:

> There was nothing lukewarm, halfhearted, or flabby about the Puritan; whatever he did, he did with zest and gusto. In that sense we might say that though his life was full of anguish of spirit, he nevertheless enjoyed it hugely. Existence for him was completely dramatic, every minute was charged with meaning. . . . He was a visionary who never forgot that two plus two equals four; he was a soldier of Jehovah who never came out on the losing side of a bargain. He was a radical and a revolutionary, but not an anarchist; when he got into power he ruled with an iron hand, and

> also according to a fundamental law. He was a practical idealist with a strong dash of cynicism; he came to New England to found the perfect society and the kingdom of the elect—and never expected it to be perfect, but only the best that fallible men could make . . . [;] his beliefs were handed down from on high and his conduct was regulated by expediency. He was a doctrinaire and an opportunist.

Such a description is useful when we tend all too mightily to find a mutually exclusive certainty, order, and stereotyped behavior in such categories as New Conservatism and New Liberalism. This does not mean that the conservative or the liberal should throw his entire lot in with an all-embracing admiration for the early Puritans (though this has scarcely been a danger since the attacks of the 1920's, when Puritanism was unhappily a bigger generic term than Victorianism, the more real object of attack).

The sins of Puritanism were many. Smugness and moral pride are among them, and we are forced to see them clearly in Mr. Carleton's comment that conservatives "are likely to overestimate the virtues and underestimate the injustices of an existing order and of their own position." The catch-penny morality of Franklin manifesting itself among the robber barons of the Gilded Age is laid at the feet of the Puritans, but that unlovely time is also a pragmatic result of the deification of man, which became so popular among the proponents and followers of Transcendentalism and the liberal reformers of the 1840's.

Despite the power and justice of the liberal tradition, there is still much to be said for the recent assumptions that New England conservatism stands up better to the test of American history than does Virginia liberalism. The wholesale subscription to a Jeffersonian philosophy that man is inherently good, that he can be counted on to behave rationally as a general principle, and that most men when given freedom of choice can be trusted to choose the beautiful, the true, and the good still remains a shaky political philosophy. The conservative frankly doubts these assumptions. He doubted them in the 1850's with the symbolic creation of a white whale and a scarlet letter A; he doubted them in the 1950's with the symbolic and real images of Hiroshima, Buchenwald, and Nuremberg. And if he is still around to enjoy his speculations, he will be doubting them also in the 2050's.

It does us no justice, ultimately, to isolate one tradition as "dominant" unless we see it as a reflection of the American spirit itself—as an eminently flexible, thrusting, vital tradition capable of modification, withdrawals, and expansions. Mr. Carleton asks, "Is not ours an amazingly diverse, pluralistic, and eclectic society held together by a kind of humanistic

pragmatism? And is not ours the probable prototype for other advanced industrial societies in the future?" "Exactly," to the first question, and "Hopefully, yes," to the second. We are a nation where both politicians and bedfellows are legendary and independent. We can remember, for instance, that the conservative Hawthorne voted for the democratic Andrew Jackson and that the liberal Emerson voted for the aristocratic John Quincy Adams. And today conservatives no less than liberals are vitally concerned with the success of Geneva and Paris sessions, the United Nations debates, and the multi-level trade and cultural exchange programs.

But if the liberal tradition is, as Mr. Carleton says, the "only tradition ample and flexible enough to allow and give meaning to our culturally heterogeneous and eclectic society," then surely it can absorb minority principles and practices. Many of the attitudes which Mr. Carleton finds in the New Conservatives—non-rational, non-democratic, anti-democratic, aristocratic, authoritarian, ritualistic—may turn out to be more shadowy than substantial, but some may be more realistic than merely crotchety. But the "dominant" tradition had better find some way to come to grips with them other than taking arms against a battalion of labels. If the founding fathers needed the pragmatic spirit of "struggle and the willingness to do battle," that need is not lessened today. The effects of the humanitarian vision of Jefferson might have been far less vital for the dominant or any other tradition without the challenge from and struggle with Hamilton.

And here perhaps is the point where Mr. Carleton's position needs modification.

A tradition of liberalism, just as a tradition of conservatism, is not above the heat and dust of conflict; it must *win* the right to prove itself continually usable. If the liberal tradition has been a victory over both the reactionary and the radical, as I think it has, we must remember that the victory has not been easily won, nor should it have been. If there is a disenchantment with the usefulness of this tradition in our own day, it may be that in the free-wheeling 1920's and 1930's the liberal took his giant steps without the strong impediment of a heel-nipping opposition, and that, when the earth beneath him showed signs of cracking, the suddenly slowed pace brought a disillusion in proportion to his earlier too-easy enthusiasms. That disillusion was the price of an irresponsible liberalism, a liberalism without intelligent checks (and not exclusively among those with the God-that-failed-us mentality). This is the price of political immaturity.

Mr. Carleton charges that the New Conservatism is "working untold

damage to American foreign policy, even to American survival." The fact is, however, that America, to offer what Mr. Carleton wants it to offer to the rising young industrial countries across the world, can ill do without the New Conservatism. It can ill do without the reminder that freedom, autonomy, self-determination, and the other ideals of the new republics since World War II, are hard to achieve in any nation, whether it was once the colonized or the colonizer. Sufficient examples are to be found in the new Africa. All too often the prospects of self-government—fostered by many not-so-quiet Americans and their "optimistic, democratic, libertarian, rational, experimental, pragmatic" attitudes—cloud considerably when this popular and admirable belief is tested against the actual fact of what man is and does. Aspiring for delivery from ignorance, inefficiency, non-reason, and sheer depravity does not by itself result in that delivery. The liberal exponents of these young experiments in self-government would do well to consider the collective wisdom of man, which, though imperfect itself, would serve as a healthy check for disparate and unbridled cases of misdirected wisdom.

Heinz Eulau has spoken of the New Deal as part of the "historical trend to achieve Jeffersonian ends by Hamiltonian means." His estimate, finally, of that political phenomenon is that it was politically "tough," meaning that it was a product of neither ideology nor violence. In the give-and-take of political necessity, the more committed ideologists and utopians were sifted out, for the central aim of FDR was a *responsible* government, and ideologists and utopians found themselves remarkably naked of such demands. Eulau writes: "Responsibility is a concept alien to both children and ideologues alike. Maturity, on the other hand, is the capacity to respond to others without making the demands of the self the sole criterion of perception and behavior."

If John Dewey, Thorstein Veblen, Charles Beard, Vernon Parrington, and Sinclair Lewis (to name a few who receive Mr. Carleton's nod) were dramatically interested in affirming the real tradition in American life, they were so usually with the full knowledge of another tradition, and their successes were not handed them with a salute-and-a-well-done from their disciples. They were won in battle with conservative opponents and with a healthy respect for those opponents. The times when they forgot or ignored their considerable opposition are the times when we can now charge them with a too-easily-won optimism, a too-naive concept of man's boundaries, and a too-simple explanation for complex affairs in human history.

If the total achievement of these men reflects the democratic tradition

of enterprise, initiative, pragmatism, and compromise—and the weaknesses as well as the strengths of such a tradition—so does that of H. L. Mencken, the anti-democrat. We should not forget that this vigorous era which Mr. Carleton and many of us admire is also the period of Huey Long, Jacob Sechler Coxey, the Ku Klux Klan, the American Legion, Michael Gold, V. F. Calverton, and Calvin Coolidge, extremists all, deviants all, when they are placed against the "dominant" tradition in America. But they were valuable in giving that tradition something to work against, a stimulus and a challenge to force it to prove itself in the dust of American social and political realities.

For this reason we should now hesitate to damn those whom Mr. Carleton freely damns: the New Humanists, the New Critics, the Southern School, and the young artists. And with all those dreamers of a Southern Antebellum Empire catalogued by Mr. Carleton and whose names, in truth as he suggests, we don't remember, we also could revive the names of those twentieth-century dreamers of an Empire of Unimpeded Labor: Floyd Dell, Emma Goldman, Melvin Levy, Big Bill Hayward and other toasts of the I.W.W., John Reed, Joe Hill, Arturo Giovannitti, Mary Heaton Vorse, John Pepper, Max Bedacht, and the hundreds of like but lesser voices from Gastonia to Seattle. Extremists rarely win the big elections, but they certainly help to make the dominant traditionalists expose their principles, test, and even modify them to embrace the needs of more Americans than can actually subscribe to extreme political imperatives.

With all this in mind, we should not only be grateful for the efforts and achievements of Mr. Carleton's "optimistic, rational, experimental, and pragmatic" Americans, but we should also be prepared at all times, within whatever trends, to push them into battle, to test their relevance against our present and future needs, to demonstrate finally that they are, in truth, pragmatic, experimental, and democratic. But to invoke the mere name of Liberalism, in the hopes of discouraging opponents from even beginning their attack or to lighten the blows once the attack is under way, is to meet them with an optative treaty of truce. We may have succeeded in forging a *public* image that is characteristically liberal, but in many respects the *private* image of the American is characteristically conservative. And this disparity, troublesome as it may have seemed at times, has been important in our gains for human dignity. It has in fact made those gains more of an achievement to celebrate and to preserve—so long as we recognize the transient virtues in celebrating and preserving.

The Three Beards of Man

By E. H. TEMPLIN

I

BLACK

Sarcastic cleaver, flies high, swims low,
Star-dagger teeth, real breasts to hoe.

Black bird, comes walky-squawky down,
Straddler of broncos, shoots up moon town.

II

GREY

Hides in the dawn for meadow lark,
Laughs softly, still has walrus-bark;

Pops into straw and out of hay,
Holds track meets on an old man's tray.

III

WHITE

With rapier laugh and mossy cough,
Lassoes tombstones turned on and off;

Then tucked in last surviving rib,
Indecent sheet, embattled bib.

E. H. TEMPLIN, Professor of Spanish at U.C.L.A., wrote and published poetry twenty years ago but stopped writing at the death of a son. His most ambitious effort of this period was a twelve sonnet sequence published in the *Sewanee Review*. Mr. Templin resumed writing two years ago and has since appeared in a good many journals and reviews.

T. Wolfe of 10 Montague Terrace

By ALLADINE BELL

EDITOR'S NOTE: With her *Thomas Wolfe, A Biography* (Doubleday, 1960) and *The Letters of Thomas Wolfe* (Scribners, 1956), Elizabeth Nowell, who died last year after a long illness, has added almost with equal bulk to the great stream of words written by Wolfe himself. For some, the tale of Wolfe's own life, told and retold, seems more than sufficient. Even if there is more to know of Wolfe himself, profundity of detail may not add to the portrait of one so self-, not to say, word-obsessed. In Alladine Bell's memories of that "big, lonely tormented man," as well as the letter from Miss Nowell written after the reading of the piece, the editors of the *Review* believe something in the way of admiration for the devotion of Wolfe's editor and literary agent (Miss Nowell) is given professional respect.

ELIZABETH NOWELL
2 PROSPECT STREET
SOUTH DARTMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS

April 26 ?

Dear Alladine:

Forgive this longhand note—I'm going back to N.Y. tomorrow for another checkup at Memorial Center & I want to write you before I go.

Since the time covered in this memoir, ALLADINE BELL (now Mrs. Dwight Hockensmith) attended Northwestern University on a playwriting scholarship, did graduate work at Yale, and earned a Master's degree at Stanford, where she was an instructor. She has published five plays for the amateur theatre, had a play produced on NBC-TV, and published a novel, *Midnight Creek*. At present, back in Utah, she is a correspondent for the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

The letter from Elizabeth Nowell to Alladine Bell originally appeared in Miss Nowell's *Thomas Wolfe: A Biography* and is reprinted here by permission of the estate of Elizabeth Nowell and the publisher, Doubleday & Company, Inc.

Your "random memories" of T.W. are *fine* and I am going to try to work some in when I revise that part of his life. But I am surprised & ashamed of him for showing that suspicious streak about your food. He always told me, joyfully, that you were not only a fine typist & secretary but that you "tied on a little ruffled apron" (I think that's what he said) and "cooks me good lunches too." Isn't it sad that he had to let that streak spoil things so often!

Well, all I can say in general is that I agree with everything you say, and some of the things have struck me with an impact of new discovery. For instance about his profile being so entirely different from how he looked full face. You are *dead right* but I never thought of it until you pointed out. I read a lot of things about T.W. & most of them have at least some things that I'm not sure are wrong, or that I, personally, disagree with. But not yours, Sugar. I agree with everything & am more sure about him as a result. And you are a damn smart girl, as well as a damn swell one, to be that way.

Go ahead & write Kay Gauss any time you want. If you can't bring yourself to mention Tom, she'll probably remember you at any rate. But *let me know* ANYtime if I can do anything, and

Love and luck
from
"Miss E. Nowell"

■ I started out from Logan, Utah, for Broadway in January, 1934, with seventy-five dollars, a play manuscript covered with white oilcloth, turned shiny side inside and laced at the top with a green leather thong, and the buoyant confidence that can be born and reared in a college playwriting class.

My manuscript was covered with white oilcloth because some small play publishing firm in New England had sent my mother, a Little Theatre director, a play manuscript bound that way. Perhaps I thought the oilcloth would protect my play from inclement weather. Certainly there was no question in my mind that this was the way to dress it for Broadway. But I did not know how to secure the pages of the manuscript. A local printer suggested we punch four holes at the top and thread the pages together with a strip of green leather.

So I set off from Utah with the happy feeling that the manuscript in my suitcase looked as professional as one by Clifford Odets. My bus ticket (one way, of course, for Broadway would want my playwriting talents permanently) cost me about fifty dollars. I don't recall that I was troubled at the prospect of facing New York City alone with a twenty-five dollar

margin for living expenses until I could find work. Producers were paying five hundred dollars for a six-month's option on a play. I could live several months on that.

To spare mother anxiety, I had been vague in reporting to her my financial situation. She was reasonably secure in allowing her daughter to invade New York City because her youngest brother, a bachelor salesman, made it his headquarters. Howard would look after his niece.

On the bus, I slept almost all the way to Chicago. There I stopped off and had lunch with a professor friend who was a native of Brooklyn. When he discovered that the playwright about to fire her first gun at the Broadway fort didn't know if the street ran north and south or east and west, he was uneasy about me. He drew a map of Manhattan for me on an envelope and sent me on my way.

When I checked at my uncle's hotel in New York City, he was not in town. I was alone in a big city. I knew not one of the millions of people who swarmed over the Island. But that first night in a downtown hotel I slept the sound sleep of the optimistic. The next morning when I called for my mail at General Delivery, I was delighted that mother had forwarded a Christmas card from a college classmate who now lived in Greenwich Village. I called her at once.

She asked, "Do you want a job?"

"Why, I suppose I do," I answered.

"A writer named Thomas Wolfe wants someone to type a manuscript for him. Why don't you call Scribner's?" she suggested.

A writer named Thomas Wolfe. I had never heard of him. I don't recall that I went in person to Scribner's. I believe I telephoned the office for the address of the writer in Brooklyn who needed a typist, then crossed the Brooklyn Bridge by subway for the first time.

I could not have been less prepared for the experience that waited for me across the bridge. Of the hundreds of young college graduates who must have been in New York that winter to pursue literary or theatrical careers, surely I was the one least qualified to encounter a legend.

Later, Mr. Wolfe told me that when he first met me, he could not believe I was old enough to have graduated from college. As a family, we mature late. Then, too, because my mother was a career woman, I had been the homemaker in our family. All of my life except two years spent away from home at college had revolved around my close-knit family, my brothers, their friends, our big clan of aunts, uncles, cousins—and the theatre.

In early Little Theatre days in Logan, Utah, funds were short. Many of the plays mother directed were rehearsed in our living room until they were performed.

"Well, kids," Dad once asked the four of us, "how do you like being brought up in a theatre?"

I was excited reading the shorthand of a play; any other type of writing bored me. The highbrow magazines that were publishing excerpts from Mr. Wolfe's books at the time seemed to me tombs. I was myopic to all of the world outside my home except that framed by a proscenium arch. I had not read *Look Homeward, Angel.*

And I was both too adolescent and too engrossed with the theatre to have had any but a few scattered dates in college. In short, I was unconscious of a worldly world with which Thomas Wolfe was acquainted and indifferent to the literary world in which he gave off light.

Looking back, I suppose I must have planned to seek a job before my twenty-five dollars was exhausted. To type a book for a writer named Thomas Wolfe was just that, a job. It was providential that I might go to work within a day after I arrived in New York City.

The name "T. Wolfe" was hand-printed in ink over a doorbell at Number 10 Montague Terrace in Brooklyn. An enormous, scowling man with curly hair waited at the top of the stairs and greeted me courteously. He'd been told by someone at Scribner's I was coming.

A reporter who interviewed Thomas Wolfe about that time listed the unpaid gas bills, the one-legged alarm clock on the mantle of the unused fireplace, the packing box, filled with manuscript scrawled in pencil on yellow paper, standing by the long, dark-stained table at which Mr. Wolfe wrote.

He showed me the manuscript he was working on.

I don't like to recall my comment: "I suppose this is the great American novel."

"Why, why," he answerd seriously, "why I hope so, Miss Bell."

Mr. Wolfe didn't want to work that first day, he wanted to talk. It is common knowledge that the man had no reserves about his personal life. He talked to me that first day as openly as he did at any time in the seven or eight months that followed when I usually spent five or six hours a day, five days a week, in his company. We established a pattern at once. He was always "Mr. Wolfe" to me, I was never anything but "Miss Bell" to him. Years later, when someone told me that Thomas Wolfe had referred to me in his *Western Journal* as "little Alladine," I was amazed that he knew how to spell my first name.

That first day I sat in a fairly comfortable chair by the windows that overlooked Montague Terrace, as I was to for many days to come, and Mr. Wolfe, in his leather house slippers, paced up and down the long living room, smoked, drank black coffee, and poured out his thoughts and feelings to a stranger. His random talk moved from the news of the

day to his personal life. The birth of the Dionne quintuplets dominated the news. Mr. Wolfe commented wryly that he was equally tired of strangers who looked up at his height as he strode through the streets of Brooklyn and Manhattan and asked, "How's the air up there?" and of the song "Who's Afraid of the Big, Bad Wolf?"

He talked. Or I satisfied his curiosity. For that was a conversation with Thomas Wolfe. You listened, or you answered questions, aware that a high precision instrument recorded every word of your reply. Mr. Wolfe controlled our many long conversations.

There were letters to answer that first day. Mr. Wolfe would never settle down to work on his manuscript if he could find a letter to answer. That first day he had just returned from a weekend in Washington at the home of his sister Mabel. He dictated to her a "thank you" letter mentioning food. Then he wrote "Mama" in Asheville and thanked her for the early spring flowers from her garden that she had pressed and sent him in a letter.

When there were no more letters to answer, he sat down at the long table, lit a cigarette, and picked up his pencil.

I have never tried to find out if the "piece"—that was his term—he wrote that afternoon was ever published. I typed it as he wrote it, placed it on his table, then waited in the chair by the windows for his comments on my first work for him.

"Why, why, Miss Bell," he said gently, "why I'm afraid you'll have to type this over. This piece is about—why, it's about the 'Bums at Sunset' not the 'Bears at Sunset.'"

Mr. Wolfe had a sense of humor, but not about his work. Remembering myself as I was then, green as April grass, I doubt that I was at all abashed about retyping the manuscript, just more familiar with the black scrawled shorthand that ran downhill on the yellow paper. When I placed my second attempt on his table, he approved and the day's work was done.

Thomas Wolfe did not go to Manhattan that first day, as he usually did when he finished writing, to go over the day's work with Maxwell Perkins at Scribner's. Instead, he detained me while he paced up and down the long living room and talked about "this friend of mine." I did not know who she was but I quickly sensed that although a rift had occurred between them, Thomas Wolfe was still deeply in love with her. He talked about the meals she used to prepare, the thick, juicy steaks and the fruit salads. He talked as only Mr. Wolfe could talk, repetitiously, circuitously, a man obsessed with words. But any subject he touched came alive.

The man was lonely. I listened as long as I could, but when light

began to fail on Montague Terrace, I wanted to be on the subway headed for my rooming house in Manhattan.

Mr. Wolfe walked out to the street with me and showed me a Brooklyn market. He was rhapsodic as a poet, or a starving man, about the displays of vegetables and fruit.

By the time he had made his purchases, it was sunset. Compared to the sunsets I remembered in my native Cache Valley, that first winter sunset in Brooklyn looked ugly as an open wound.

So this man calls himself a writer, the brash Cache Valley kid thought, and I reported the episode in a letter to Mother. Let's hear him make an original comment on this sunset.

Thomas Wolfe did not comment on the Brooklyn sunset, but as he walked with me toward Brooklyn Bridge, he talked about its beauties as though he were describing the delicate structure of a butterfly's wings. This Thomas Wolfe was to do for me many times. He lifted up New York's features and showed me their beauty.

I was homesick. In the months that followed, I wrote detailed letters home which Mother saved for me. Even if she had not, I believe I would even now be able to reconstruct much of what happened and what was said so many years ago. You could not encounter the man in person or through his books without feeling the bigness of his mind and spirit. You could not hear him talk on any subject nor transcribe his illegible black scrawl, as I did page by page as he whipped the yellow paper out from under his pencil, without knowing that this was no single-watt man, but a hydroelectric plant of emotion.

Indirectly, through Mother's letters from Utah, I learned the literary stature of the man I was working for. Even then I didn't take time to pick up *Look Homeward, Angel* from the library. It must have been months after I finished working for Thomas Wolfe, perhaps a year or more, before I read it.

For hours we talked together, I in the chair by the window, he pacing the room. Thomas Wolfe was egocentric but not an egotist. He accepted his talent as he accepted his thinning hair and talked about it as objectively.

He was then a bachelor in his early thirties and he wanted to marry. "A German girl," he kept telling me, "a *hausfrau*." A man interested in acquiring a wife wants to do so before he loses his hair.

Mr. Wolfe talked to me about women. Every woman owed it to Thomas Wolfe to be beautiful. A plain woman irritated him. And he expected to be attracted to the great majority of the women he met. Once he commented on a woman, "I think she must be anemic. I'm not attracted to her."

He dictated a letter to another young woman, then naively asked me if she could tell by the original that he'd kept a carbon.

On another day he told me details about his date of the previous evening.

"Mr. Wolfe!" I reproved him. "No gentleman ever speaks about a woman he's been out with in that way!"

He meekly accepted the rebuke.

To me, Mr. Wolfe was a middle-aged man who belonged to another generation. He was unkempt. But he must have thought of himself as a young man, a young artist. Among the few books in the apartment were Carlisle's *The French Revolution* and James Joyce's *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* which he kept at hand to read and re-read.

He was faithful to his book and to his memory of Aline Bernstein, and in that order, or so I believe.

I don't know at what point I became aware that "this friend of mine" was Aline Bernstein. Thomas Wolfe I had never heard of before I arrived in New York, but the name Aline Bernstein ran straight down my single-track theatre mind.

Instinct told me not to mention her name to him; nor do I recall that he ever called her by name to me, but as he talked about her she became real to me. I began to look for her in the subway, in the crowd outside the theatre at intermission time. I know nothing of the other attachments in his life, nor how he spent his evenings during the seven or eight months I typed his manuscript, but I believe Aline Bernstein was never far from his thoughts.

She had written a book, *Three Blue Suits,* about him, her husband, and Maxwell Perkins. Mr. Wolfe was then not moving consecutively through a book, but writing in his haphazard way, throwing himself into the episode that would constitute a day's work as the spirit moved him. Included in what he was writing was a candid portrait of Mrs. Bernstein. As he wrote it in manuscript form, I do not recall that he photographed her through chiffon nor that he retouched the portrait. But he was indignant at her portrait of him in *Three Blue Suits.*

He reported to me that he had exploded to "this friend of mine": "Why did you have to write it?"

"To get it off my mind," she had answered.

"I told her, why I told her," he sputtered to me as he strode back and forth, "why I told her, 'At least you could have told the truth.' "

I reminded Mr. Wolfe, "But you've just got through writing about her."

"That has nothing to do with it!" he retorted.

I was enormously amused at this incident, but I didn't let Mr. Wolfe know. But angry as he was at her book, it was Aline Bernstein's style of cooking he liked, her anecdotes that amused him. Once when she had fitted a costume to a vain actor he told her, "But I am noted for my torso." It was a type of humor that delighted Thomas Wolfe.

In the hours when he should have been writing, he talked about his family. "My b-b-brother F-f-fred," he'd often say, "the b-b-best fellow in the world."

Or, "My b-b-brother F-f-fred, he st-st-stutters."

His running correspondence with Mama in Asheville was spirited. During the time I knew him, or perhaps before, Mr. Wolfe changed from his first agent to representation by Elizabeth Nowell. Miss Nowell (and she was always "Miss Nowell" in our conversations, never "Elizabeth") sold a "piece" by Wolfe to the *American Mercury*. Mama rose from those pages a real estate shark. Distance did not prevent her from soundly cuffing son Thomas. Visibly shaken after he read her letter, Mr. Wolfe remarked:

"I d-d-don't think M-m-m-mama understands."

As I listened day after day I became more and more wary of the big man who paced, drank black coffee, smoked, and talked. Early in our acquaintance I decided, "I am an obscure little typist who mistakes bums at sunset for bears, but if Mr. Wolfe lives long enough he'll write down everything I tell him."

I limited what I told him to talk about my family and about Cache Valley.

I did not smoke; I had never tasted an alcoholic drink; I had seen almost no drunkenness. Looking back, I wonder if Thomas Wolfe sometimes suffered from hangovers on the afternoons when he was so tired he had to whip himself to the long table to write. But at the time the thought never occurred to me.

I tried to amuse a man who was always tired. I was corresponding with a teen-age brother in Utah, no less stagestruck than myself.

"Egad, sister," he'd write me, "tell me all your adventures in the big city."

My brother's flamboyant letters never failed to amuse Thomas Wolfe. Often when I'd arrive at Number 10 Montague Terrace for a day's work, he'd ask me, "Do you have any letters from your 'egad' brother?"

More than once he protested at the reporter who had catalogued the furnishings of the shabby apartment. Thomas Wolfe plead he was entitled to a "decent private life."

I was sympathetic and determined to co-operate. A college professor who wrote a reference about me at that time called me loyal to a fault.

Perhaps this trait more than any other determined my attitude toward Thomas Wolfe. When people asked me about him, I was ready with a stock answer that was to serve me for years to come: "If you've read his books, you know as much about him as I do."

Mr. Wolfe was pleased when I told him this. Our tacit understanding, which I took as seriously as an oath to high office, was that I should not discuss him outside Number 10 Montague Terrace. It never occurred to me that while I was doggedly keeping faith with him, he was writing down for publication every detail of his life as rapidly as he could push his pencil downhill on yellow paper.

He talked about "this book that's inside me" or "to get this book out of me" as though it were Gant's cancer. He was haunted by the fear that the second book would not be as good as the first. Once he told me he could not go to work on this second book as soon as he'd finished *Look Homeward, Angel* before he found out how it would be received. "It would be like leaving the bedside of a child," he said.

To write *Of Time and the River* he shucked all unimportant matters from his life. He didn't seem to care if he bought new clothes nor if he kept what he owned clean and in repair. He was invited to a costume party but could not go because he was unable to rent a costume big enough. But this invitation belonged to the unreal world that hardly mattered at all to a man living with his book.

Brooklyn held a fascination for him. He loved to roll place names such as the "Gowanus Canal" over his tongue. A favorite cartoon of his appeared, I believe, in the *New Yorker*: "Ah, to die like this and in Brooklyn."

As he wrote, bits of poetic prose washed up like flecks of gold from the manuscript. Thomas Wolfe told me with a smile, "Max calls them dithyrambs."

I looked out at Thomas Wolfe from the windows of my own little world, conventional as a row of suburban homes, furnished complete with a kindly Heavenly Father who took care of you and a philosophy that if you didn't drink or smoke and if you lived the Golden Rule life would work itself out day by day as happily as it had for me throughout the New York adventure.

I felt sorry for the big, lonely tormented man who was only at peace with himself when he was seated at the long table, filling yellow pages with pencil script with the speed of a machine. If Thomas Wolfe held religious convictions, he did not express them in any of our conversations. His extraordinarily sensitive response to the "mystery and beauty of life" was his religion, his genius.

By shuttling back and forth in conversation between the present and the past, Mr. Wolfe prepared himself for the day's work. A memory of "this friend of mine," meaning in this instance the friend who became Starwick in *Of Time and the River*, told me what episode he would write that day. Often he'd confuse a fictional name with a real name or interchange them both in the period of recollection that preceeded composition and in the actual writing. A woman would be Helen on one page, Mary on the next. Usually when I pointed out such a discrepancy he brushed it aside as unimportant. Names of women characters he chose indifferently, but he fancied the name Starwick.

Not until he had succeeded in moving back to the past, or more often not until a telephone call from Mr. Perkins in Manhattan forced him to his table, would Mr. Wolfe begin his day's work. When the telephone rang, Mr. Wolfe would stand at the mantle to lie, "Why yes, yes, Max. We're getting right down to work now." Sometimes he'd add, "I'll have the little girl with me. I haven't paid her this week."

Then for perhaps two or more hours the yellow pages covered with black scrawl would fly as though they'd been blown from a fan. Usually he didn't take time to number them as he wrote. I'd catch up the pages as he finished them. By typing fast I could keep up with him.

August in Brooklyn that year was a life sentence in stifling confinement. Mr. Wolfe talked of his father, his remote gray eyes, his father as a young man, as a young widower, his father on his deathbed. Thomas Wolfe was losing his father for the second time. While he was writing the "death of Gant" sequences for *Of Time and the River,* he considered it among his best work.

"It's strange," he told me. "Sometimes I write best when I don't feel well or am very tired."

I was tremendously moved as I typed the material, but I said nothing to Mr. Wolfe. I am sure I did not spare him my views on life, love, and religion, but I don't recall that I ever commented to him on his writing.

At about five o'clock on a working day we could expect another call from "Max."

"Why, why, we're leaving right now, Max," Mr. Wolfe would lie again.

If Mr. Perkins made it perfectly clear he could not wait indefinitely, we'd make preparations to leave at once for Manhattan. But it was my impression that whenever he could, Maxwell Perkins arranged his after five hours around an editorial session with Thomas Wolfe, followed by dinner. Often Mr. Wolfe would steal time to write a few more pages before we left for Manhattan.

But if Maxwell Perkins' authoritative voice over the telephone abruptly ended a working day, Mr. Wolfe, still reliving a scene from his past so completely he was barely aware of his surroundings, would find his pulpy felt hat, his shapeless topcoat, I'd stuff the typed manuscript in his briefcase and try to match his stride down the steps, out on Montague Terrace, then through Brooklyn's harsh streets to the subway.

Usually I didn't attempt to speak above the train in transit. Mr. Wolfe needed time to quiet down from two or more hours of high-pitched emotional writing. Usually he'd stare ahead, not really looking out of the window or at the advertising cards in the subway car, for the entire trip to Manhattan. Once when I watched him I remarked that his profile was utterly different from full face. I doubt that I again made another personal remark.

Mr. Wolfe might look as though he were out of contact with today's subway ride, but he would always arouse himself at Grand Central station. Maxwell Perkins was waiting in his office on Fifth Avenue, but often Thomas Wolfe would take time to pause on the mezzanine of the station.

"Watch, Miss Bell," he told me once. "The people down below move in a pattern. No matter how many come into the station, go out, the pattern is always the same."

At Scribner's, Mr. Perkins, wearing a buckskin-colored hat, would be waiting at his desk. Often Mr. Wolfe would announce from the doorway, "I've got the little girl with me." Looking back, I think of the fascinating correspondence, the conferences with literary giants that made up a working day for Maxwell Perkins. Yet he always seemed to be waiting for the moment when Thomas Wolfe, overcoat flying, would stride into the office with his briefcase and apologize for being late. There was always that look of expectancy on Mr. Perkins' face as he greeted us from his desk.

He could easily have arranged for the Wolfe manuscript to be typed in the Scribner's offices. But wise father that he was, Mr. Perkins knew that having someone on the spot to catch up and type the yellow pages as they flew kept the tired writer working.

And Maxwell Perkins handed Thomas Wolfe spending money just as though he were an adolescent son, or so it seemed to me, although undoubtedly the arrangement was a businesslike method of paying Mr. Wolfe an advance. The man never had a dime on him. Either Mr. Perkins advanced money in just the amounts Thomas Wolfe needed, or he spent whatever was advanced to him as fast as it was given to him.

Mr. Wolfe was not a revising writer. Often the manuscript he carried to Mr. Perkins was just as it had first been written, with only an occasional word marked out and changed. Sometimes when he wrote, Mr. Wolfe

would crumple up a page and start again; usually he did not. Certainly no second, third, or fourth draft travelled in the briefcase to the Scribner's offices in Manhattan. There, according to Mr. Wolfe's own story, he stood by and cried out in pain as Maxwell Perkins cut, spliced, joined to give the writing whatever form it had when published.

In reading the published version of the European trip of Elinor, Starwick, and Eugene in *Of Time and the River,* I realized that Mr. Perkins mercifully cut a ream from the original version.

Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Perkins usually spent an hour or two on the manuscript, then often they went out to dinner together, sometimes accompanied by Mrs. Perkins. Frequently she arranged a date for Mr. Wolfe. After leaving the Perkinses', he prowled Manhattan and Brooklyn's streets and bars, perhaps to recover from the intensity of his day's work, or, I sometimes suspected, to defeat himself by making the next day's work difficult.

Looking back, I can't believe I paid $5.00 a week for a room, bought meals, subway rides to Brooklyn, and theatre tickets from what I earned typing *Of Time and the River* and an occasional check from home.

True, my wardrobe was not extensive. A theatre director who knew me about this time recalled I owned one hat, a red beret I wore straight on my head as though it had been dropped by a hay fork. Of course I was too busy to tilt a beret at a fashionable angle. There was that roaring river of prose to be damned up into each day's work and so much to see and learn on Broadway.

I don't recall that I window-shopped with longing the fine Fifth Avenue stores, but I believed a trench coat indispensable to an artistic career. When my uncle returned to New York a week after I arrived, he found I had a room in a pullman apartment operated by two wonderfully warm older women, I had a job, and I had submitted my play to a Broadway producer. I lacked nothing but a trench coat. My uncle lent me $14.00 to buy one.

So, dressed in my trench coat and my red beret, I called on theatrical offices in the mornings before I crossed the Brooklyn Bridge to go to work for Mr. Wolfe at eleven. Only once do I remember arriving in Brooklyn with my manuscript. Then Mr. Wolfe sent me on a long errand. When I returned I felt sure he had read parts of my play, but he made no comment.

Nor did he offer to share with me any of his gilt-edged theatre contacts. And this was typical of him. At that time F. Scott Fitzgerald and Sinclair Lewis towered above rising young Thomas Wolfe, but both

of them wrote him letters warmly praising his writing. But I do not recall that Mr. Wolfe took any interest in any writer who did not stand as tall in the literary world as he did. Since he usually referred to me to Maxwell Perkins as "the little girl," probably he did not take my theatrical aspirations seriously.

I discovered, of course, shortly after I arrived in New York City that plays submitted for Broadway consideration were bound in thick paper covers, secured at the side with brass pins, not in oilcloth secured at the top with a green leather thong. One day I threw financial caution to the winds, took a day off from being paid for typing *Of Time and the River,* re-typed my play, then bound the copies conventionally.

I need not have bothered. The oilcloth covered copies carried the play farther than the conventionally bound ones. In the alphabetical list of Broadway producers to which I submitted the oilcloth covered copies, the play got as far as the "B's." A play agent reading for producer Courtney Burr sighted the oilcloth in the stack of manuscripts she was attempting to read.

"My God!" was her reaction. "Who would get up a play like that?"

She read it, laughed aloud, then typed a postcard to me asking me to come to her office. When I arrived, she greeted me with a canny look.

"Alladine Bell," she said. "Now come clean. I can't do business with a nom de plume."

"I was christened with a nom de plume," I told her.

Only hours after I left the agent's office, a young director walked in and saw the oilcloth-covered manuscript on her desk. For the second time in its lifetime, someone reacted with a "My God!"

The director sat down in the agent's office, read the play, and laughed aloud. You cannot beat the combination of heedlessness and confidence. About a year after I set out from Utah with seventy-five dollars, a play bound in white oilcloth, and a map of Manhattan drawn on an envelope, I was summoned to an agent's office to sign a Broadway contract.

The play was not produced. The option lapsed when the backer, orchestra leader Abe Lyman, was struck by a virus and went to Florida. Or perhaps he re-read the play and agreed with a diagnosis made later by the late Barrett Clark. The play was very funny, Barrett Clark said, but it didn't matter if you played Act II before Act I or Act III before both of the other acts.

Thomas Wolfe's trail crossed mine twice more before he died. Before one of his trips to Europe, Elizabeth Nowell asked me to go to his apartment in Brooklyn with her. Together we went through the unnum-

bered pages of the manuscript in the packing box and tried to decide what episode belonged in what book. Mr. Wolfe was, of course, writing one long, continuous record of his life. Twice Mr. Perkins chopped off a book like a single sausage from a string. To sort the rest of the manuscript, all Miss Nowell and I needed to know was what happened to Thomas Wolfe in what period of his life.

Again I encountered Mr. Wolfe in his Hotel Chelsea days. He asked me to work for him again, but I did not. I heard indirectly that this decision hurt him. Only then did I know that he had wanted me as an individual to type his manuscript and handle his correspondence.

Loyal as I was to him, I do not remember why I didn't want to work for him again. But that first experience had been precarious financially. Perhaps I just couldn't face going through it again.

In the hours in Brooklyn when Thomas Wolfe and I talked so he wouldn't have to work, I must have gone on endlessly about my home valley. Years later, he satisfied his lively curiosity by including Cache Valley in his western trip. "No wonder little Alladine loved it so," he wrote in his *Journal.*

Death at thirty-eight is untimely for a young man, but the bulk of the best work of the young artist Thomas Wolfe lay in the packing box Miss Nowell and I sorted through before he made one of his trips to Europe. And his Perkins books had been published.

I haven't tried to keep up with the mass of literature about Thomas Wolfe nor have I re-read *Of Time and the River* since he wrote a few lines in a copy of the first edition and presented the book to me. Perhaps I want to keep fresh my first-hand memories of Mr. Wolfe. When I think of him, I see him in the hot August when he wrote "the death of Gant," sitting at the long table, a cigarette stuck in his lower lip, puffing, squinting up at the ceiling through the smoke as he moved back, back to the time of his father's death.

Ethics in Transition

The Freudian Ethic. By Richard LaPiere. Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1960. $5.00.

Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method and Philosophy. A Symposium edited by Sidney Hook. New York University Press, 1960. $5.00.

New Knowledge in Human Values. Edited by Abraham H. Maslow. Harper and Bros., 1960. $4.50.

For some years reporting sociologists and sociological reporters have been examining the current American ethic. In recent months our "moral fibre" has become a more and more frequent subject of concern for politicians, the press, and the TV discussion programs.

With evidence abounding that all's not right with the world of our moral concepts—much less with our ability to abide by them—there is little doubt that the subject will be important and popular for many years to come.

A new book of social and moral diagnosis is *The Freudian Ethic,* by Stanford Sociology Professor Richard LaPiere. He contends that the Protestant ethic which served us so well in former times, with its view of man as by nature independent, self-reliant, rational, and capable of moral courage, has been replaced by a Freudian ethic whose ideal is the adjustment of the individual to his life circumstances, and which views man as, from birth, "shackled by biological urges that can never be freely expressed and that set him in constant and grievous conflict with his society."

As LaPiere points out, and as another recent book—*Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method and Philosophy,* a symposium edited by Sidney Hook—makes clear far more authoritatively, it is remarkable that a system of ideas as metaphysical as are those derived from psychoanalysis has been so widely accepted as scientifically proven. An accident of history had something to do with the fact that psychoanalysis developed as a branch of medicine: Freud was a doctor. That he was a great and poetic thinker who opened up all sorts of fruitful avenues for experimentation is by almost no one denied. But a crucial question asked by Philosophy Professor Charles Frankel in his contribution to *Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method and Philosophy* is whether Freud will turn out to have been the Newton, or rather the Lucretius, of psychological knowledge.

Though Lucretius' poetry ranks among the finest of all time, and though his concept of a world composed of atoms was crudely accurate, it was not until a millenium and a half later that the basic theories and observations were laid down on which could be built a systematic science of the physical world.

Professor LaPiere's view is that psychoanalysis is a self-validated system, comparable to religion, in which one revealed truth is simply validated in terms of another without there being any way of breaking into the system. LaPiere may have a distorted view, though it is shared by a few disillusioned psychoanalysts; and there are those who say that since the modern generation won't take its problems to its local priests, leave the psychoanalysts and the therapists they influence alone, for they are better than no one.

But anyone interested in the validity of psychoanalysis, and of the myriad ideas that have been derived from it, will profit greatly from the collection of contributions edited by Sidney Hook. Professor Hook states that, so far as he is aware, "This is the first time in the United States that a distinguished group of psychoanalysts has met with a distinguished group of philosophers of science in a free, critical interchange of views on the scientific status of psychoanalysis."

The result is stimulating indeed, as the psychoanalytic disciples meet an unusually strong and bold force of snipers and doubters.

The psychoanalytic view of man may turn out on further investigation to be more valid than now appears, or less so. But in either case, it is a fact that this view has been accepted by enormous numbers of people, and it has come to permeate our society to a startling degree.

The major value of Professor LaPiere's book is its demonstration of this prevalence of Freudian ideas (which are often as far removed from those of their founder as recent doctrines of progressive education are from those of John Dewey). In our homes, especially, but far, far beyond them as well, the value to which all else—even society—is all too often subordinated, is the mental welfare of the individual. The child is to grow up to be a well-adjusted adult, uninhibited and free from any of the psychological scars that might result from unhappy experiences or too much work or being different from his playmates. Whether he ever does anything worth doing is a question lost in the background.

As LaPiere sees it, the Freudian ethic can be described as sanctioning "complacency . . . lack of constraining or inhibiting social principles . . . lack of set goals, lack of any rigorous system of personal-social values and sentiments, and complete absence of any sense of obligation toward others."

This quotation is indeed a rough approximation of an attitude we see rampant around us. But in blaming as much of it on Freud as he does, LaPiere overstates his case. And he compounds the overstatement by attributing the welfare state, too, in considerable degree to the Freudian ethic, which he claims has destroyed economic initiative and enterprise.

Like so many of his predecessors, LaPiere seems to err in supposing that our trouble lies in the replacement of one ethic—the Protestant ethic—by another, be it the Freudian, the other-directed, the technological, or the organization one.

The trouble seems rather that ethics itself has collapsed, and that the foundations on which any particular ethic could be built have been swept away.

In one area of endeavor after another, it has come to be thought irrelevant to ask whether a course of action is good or right. In politics, it is accepted that power should be sought as an end in itself; in international affairs, the interests of the nation state are almost the only criteria; in the arts, the effect for good or ill of a particular work is virtually never considered; in educational and social endeavors, our children are not asked to do what is right, but to do efficiently what they want.

The trouble seems not that Americans have today more lust for power or stronger tendencies toward greed and frivolity than they formerly had. It is that "right" and "wrong" in the moral sense have lost their meaning. And the development of thought, as much as or more than the growth of industrialization and its social by-products, seems to have been the cause.

In the nineteenth century, the ethics of all but a few rested squarely on faith: either faith in God or faith in Man. In the twentieth, faith in God has dwindled of its own accord, so that what vitality our churches now have is often due to the fact that they provide meetings and dances and are crusaders for social reform, not because of their attempts to dispense ultimate beliefs; many observers have described this debasement of religion into religiosity. Faith in man has been exploded by two world wars and the bestiality we have witnessed among civilized peoples.

Belief in the possibility of moral absolutes has been replaced, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, by an ethical relativism which sees judgments on questions of good and evil as little more than expressions of personal preference on the part of he who delivers them. The individual is thus at a loss to know whose preferences to prefer; he is in a permanently bewildered state.

At present this attitude is no longer confined to the few who consciously articulate such positions; it has become the unconsciously assumed viewpoint of the majority. Everywhere one turns (the quiz show episode

was only one instance) one is told not to judge one's fellow, warned not to cast the first stone, advised to forgive every crime and human failing, admonished that others' standards may be as good as one's own. Children are not told what is right, they are encouraged to develop standards of their own (as if they could, just like that).

As a reaction against the moral hypocrisy and self-righteousness so repellent in the Victorian era and beyond, the popular acceptance of moral shadings has been a heartening thing. But now that the understanding that no moral issue is black or white has given way to the supposition that all shades of grey are equal, the need for a re-examination is evident.

It is one thing for a few intellectuals to suppose that there is no such thing as right and wrong; it is quite another for the public to learn this lesson and act upon it, as it was when the servant Smerdyakov took the parallel reasonings of Ivan Karamazov to heart, and murdered to please.

In the current period of rampant amorality—not immorality—disturbing attitudes seem to prevail, not because they have been chosen over the old ideals, but because the question of whether these attitudes are right or not, or have any value or not, is simply not being asked. And merely trying to reassert the old attitudes without asking any more ethical questions than we have been asking recently is of little use, though this is what one critic of the current scene after another advises us to do.

What good is enterprise, if it is only to acquire three cars instead of two? What good are non-conformity and individualism, if they only encourage the individual to scrutinize his every unique but petty dissatisfaction? And what good is creativity, if the objects created are worthless? Value judgments are simply not dispensable.

The Protestant ethic is almost certainly gone for good, and a reasserted religious faith will probably not again provide the foundation for ethics. That a search for truth has supplanted faith—in God or man—is a trend unlikely to be reversed.

Some observers are filled with despair at seeing in our time even our intellectuals, who should, they think, know better, give up their moral standards. Perhaps there is less cause for despair than they fear: in a very real sense it has often been intellectual honesty which has led the intellectuals to do so. They can no longer rationally accept the bases of the former ethical dicta, and they are too devoted to truth to adopt them purely on faith. That they are willing naively to accept the logical consequences of their rational beliefs is not altogether to their discredit.

Certainly we cannot go on doing without an ethical system much longer—the futility of trying to do without one can be seen too plainly. But the way lies not in exhorting us back to either an old, or a newly-

invented faith, but in demonstrating to us that a rational system of ethics is possible after all, that we can indeed discern the rightness or wrongness of different acts and make moral judgments which are not just expressions of private likes and dislikes.

Providing such a new foundation on which ethics can be built will be one of the great tasks of the coming decades.

The hammering and forging have already begun in modest ways. In current philosophic literature there is an increasing awareness of the absurdity of a thoroughgoing ethical relativism. Some of the ideas of the late British philosopher and champion of common sense, G. E. Moore, are being applied anew and improved upon in an attempt to define a human moral faculty which enables us to simply "see" that an outrageous action is not right, somewhat as we see that a red table is not blue. Though it may be too soon to offer assessments of these and other efforts to construct a new and rational foundation for ethics, we can draw encouragement from the fact that the work is proceeding.

Because this job stands out in urgency, I opened with high hopes a recent book called *New Knowledge in Human Values*, a symposium edited by Abraham Maslow. He states in his promising introduction that

> the volume springs from the belief, first, that the ultimate disease of our time is valuelessness; second, that this state is more crucially dangerous than ever before in history; and finally, that something can be done about it by man's own rational efforts. . . . We are in an interregnum between old value systems that have not worked and new ones not yet born. . . . We need a validated, usable system of human values, values that we can believe in and devote ourselves to because they are true rather than because we are *exhorted* to "believe and have faith."

After this hopeful opening, the volume, unfortunately, indicates not so much that we are on the threshhold of a new system of values as that an awful lot of floundering lies ahead before we get one. With one notable exception, one contributor after another—including Maslow himself, Erich Fromm, Gordon Allport, and others—commits what G. E. Moore referred to as the naturalistic fallacy: they define goodness as whatever they like best or is their specialty. Instead of considering the conditions that would make a science of ethics possible, they transform factual conclusions about healthy people, the ability to be creative, and the widening of a child's interests, into normative judgments, offering no reasons for choosing their favored definition of the good over that of a rival.

Our theorists may not come up with a full-fledged new ethics for

many years; in the meantime there are hopeful signs that the enlightened segment of the public may forge ahead on its own. There is an increasing recognition that, by now, the consequences of making no moral judgments at all can be worse than the consequences of risking a mistaken judgment now and then. To go on postponing criticism of repugnant business practices, of needless brutality, of total selfishness and self-indulgence, in the name of a how-can-I-know-what's-right humility, is in our present condition more irresponsible than offering an occasional censure for which no total justification can be found.

In the decade just begun we may not know what is right and what is wrong with any more certainty than we know now, but there are signs that we can, and probably will, make a few better guesses.

New York, N.Y. —VIRGINIA HELD

German Nationalism: An Autopsy Report

The Mind of Germany: The Education of a Nation. By Hans Kohn. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960. $5.95.

The complex maze of German history has been a subject of great fascination to the social scientist. There are indeed few parallels to this story of a talented and industrious people which committed what came close to national suicide. Many studies have been undertaken in search of an explanation, and to these Professor Hans Kohn has now added another important contribution.

Kohn's approach to the "German problem" differs from previous investigations. Unlike most of his predecessors, he does not view it in the conventional terms of democracy vs. dictatorship. Instead, he focuses his attention on a related aspect to which he has given much thought as an interpreter of the German scene—the history of Germany's alienation from the West. He sees Germany moving, over the last two centuries, from a tolerant cosmopolitanism to a self-centered repressive nationalism, and he has set himself the task of tracing this evolution (as well as its countercurrents) in the writings of nineteenth and twentieth century Germany and Austria.

As always, Dr. Kohn's erudition is impressive. He has read more

widely in the field of German literature than most historians, and he can thus discuss not only the works of philosophers, historians, and political scientists, but is equally at home in the world of the poets, the novelists, and the dramatists. The story of German political thought acquires a new dimension in this book; among its most interesting parts are sections on the romantics, Novalis and Adam Müller, and those notable pairs of brothers, the Grimms and the Schlegels. There are excellent essays also on Heinrich Heine, the antinationalist patriot, and Richard Wagner, the high priest of racial decadence and the coming German age of a new ethics, on Stefan George, the prophet of a new leadership mystique, and Rainer Maria Rilke, one of the greatest of Austria's (and Germany's) lyric poets. The chapter on Goethe is an eloquent testimony to the Olympian's human ethos and wisdom; it is less helpful on his political views. For what it praises as Goethe's political universalism was actually nothing more than a fundamental indifference to the politics of the day.

In his discussion of the scholars, the philosophers and historians, Kohn provides informative summaries of thinkers like Ranke and Treitschke, Nietzsche and Spengler. Readers will be especially grateful for the balanced evaluations of such lesser minds as Paul de Lagarde, Julius Langbehn, and Moeller van den Bruck. Attention should also be called to the penetrating analysis of Carl Schmitt, the most influential political scientist of the Weimar era who is still quite unknown in this country.

In its basic outline, the story of the contest in Germany between national and universal values is of course known, but Kohn presents new and revealing perspectives. One is impressed, for example, by the great number of German thinkers who were able to transcend national limitations, and by the creative wealth of their work. Yet if there were so many of these, why did they fail to exert a more effective influence on their countrymen? Kohn offers no direct answer, for he is concerned with the "how" rather than the "why" of Germany's politico-intellectual evolution. His discussion does, however, throw some new light on this question and thus helps to refine earlier explanations.

Most of the leading non-nationalists, the book makes clear, shared a striking inability to come to grips with their German environment. They either turned their back on the nation's life, as did Stefan George, so as to devote themselves fully to their creative concerns, or they left Germany in their despair, as did Heine, Nietzsche, and Rilke, to mention but the best known among them. (Rilke in his aversion to things German even turned into something of an Italian nationalist in his Swiss exile.)

One is tempted to add that those who remained seemed to deprive

themselves almost willfully of whatever impact they might have had on their countrymen. For most of them indulged in a literary style so flaccid and awkward as to make it an exacting chore to acquaint oneself with their thoughts. Gervinus, the historian, and Konstantin Frantz, the publicist, are cases in point as are the philosopher Karl Christian Planck and the theologian Ernest Troeltsch. Some of the major novelists, too, shared this failing, and one cannot but wonder how much of Thomas Mann's turgid prose was actually being read. Their antagonists, on the other hand, the Treitschkes and Spenglers, Ernst Jünger and Carl Schmitt, were accomplished literary craftsmen whose masterful diction established an immediate rapport with their readers.

Beyond these surface manifestations, the victory of the nationalists goes back, as Kohn too suggests, to causes rooted in the more remote German past. The extraordinary vehemence of German nationalism was both an outgrowth of and a reaction to the subdued parochialism that had characterized German life far into the nineteenth century. Most Germans had never belonged to the "Western" community. Only the southern and western fringes of the country had been part of the Roman Empire and its civilization; little more than these same areas had been touched by the spiritual and cultural upsurge of the Renaissance. And if Catholicism had fostered some supranational ties, the Reformation destroyed these bonds before they could become meaningful to the faithful.

The division of Germany into a multitude of small states likewise kept life restricted to its narrow confines, and so did the insistence of Lutheranism that secular authority must unreservedly be obeyed. Such indeed was the force of these limitations that the Enlightenment which revolutionized the Germans' ethical and cultural world did little to enrich their political vistas; unlike their Western contemporaries, they never thought of challenging their archaic governments. They thus looked back upon a history quite unlike that of their neighbors, but in the anational atmosphere of pre-Napoleonic Europe this was not evident or even important.

It became obvious and significant, however, once Germans too became national-minded in the wake of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Nationalism is by definition self-centered, but German nationalism seemed more so than other varieties. As Kohn points out, it was founded, not on the concept of a social contract and the rights of man, but on the irrational mystique of a German *Volkstum*. A derivate of the nation's elemental ethnic, psychic, and historical forces, it lacked the moderating influence of humane and universal ideas and defied the

restrained rationalism of the West (and in this sense it is indeed right to speak of a German alienation from Western values).

Kohn traces this process with great skill and thoroughness. We are shown how temporarily national thinking was tempered by its association with the liberal movement and how, after its triumph over liberalism in Bismarck's day, moral cynicism and distrust of the individual cast their lengthening shadows across a large part of the intellectual scene. We are likewise shown, in the writings of Max Weber and Friedrich Naumann, how liberal thinking too was affected by this lack of universal humanitarian ideals.

Political attitudes are not solely intellectual phenomena, however, and Dr. Kohn is of course aware of their multi-faceted nature. He touches on their historical, geopolitical, and economic components, and he points out the vital fact that Germany lacked an alert, self-reliant citizenry, insistent on its rights and determined to defend them against any violations. Looking upon the state as their guardian and guide, most Germans were receptive to the narow state-oriented perspective which the bulk of their intellectual leaders adopted, for it reflected and expressed their own views. One wishes that Dr. Kohn had put greater emphasis on this interrelationship in order to define more precisely the impact of these thinkers on German society. Concentrating on the intellectual underpinnings of German attitudes, he is at times inclined to assign to these latter elements an overly decisive influence. In his discussion of the Weimar period he even ventures the statement that "within little more than a decade German intellectuals succeeded in leading the German people into the abyss." Few readers will be ready to accept this charge without some qualification.

This is not to minimize the role of the intellectual in the shaping of the national mind—least of all in Germany where the man of education, *der gebildete Mensch,* has always enjoyed great prestige. His contribution was and will continue to be an important one; in fact, in view of the spiritual vacuum which prevails now in Germany, there is a pressing need for his help. He can render his countrymen a lasting service by helping them to develop those qualities of tolerance and moderation which alone can transform their new democratic institutions into a meaningful reality.

He faces another equally important task. The Bonn Republic has become a member of NATO, of the European Coal and Steel Community, and more recently of the Common Market and Euratom, but it has done so much more because of practical political considerations than because of any spiritual soul-searching. Although a revival of the old

nationalism is hard to envisage today, this process of integration will not be completed until it is wholeheartedly accepted by the nation. To help foster this spirit of co-operation and understanding will again be a vital responsibility of the country's writers and scholars, its poets and novelists, its historians and philosophers.

Dr. Kohn has shown what influence German thinkers have been able to wield—alas, for the bad. The hope must be that they will now exercise it for the good of both their nation and their fellow men.

Ohio State University —ANDREAS DORPALEN

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